

University of Mississippi

eGrove

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Graduate School

2011

Written in Black and White: a Content Analysis of Newspaper Coverage of the Desegregation of Three Flagship Public Southern Universities

Michael Alexander Patronik

Follow this and additional works at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/etd>



Part of the Journalism Studies Commons

Recommended Citation

Patronik, Michael Alexander, "Written in Black and White: a Content Analysis of Newspaper Coverage of the Desegregation of Three Flagship Public Southern Universities" (2011). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 223.

<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/etd/223>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

WRITTEN IN BLACK AND WHITE: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF NEWSPAPER
COVERAGE OF THE DESEGREGATION OF THREE FLAGSHIP SOUTHERN PUBLIC
UNIVERSITIES

A Thesis

presented in partial fulfillment of requirements

for the degree of Master of Arts

in the School of Journalism

The University of Mississippi

by

MICHAEL A. PATRONIK

May 2011

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to correlate agenda-setting effects of the press to newspaper coverage of public university desegregations in the southern United States in the early 1960s. Front-page news and editorial page content from the *Atlanta Constitution*, the *Athens Banner-Herald* and the *Red & Black* newspapers were analyzed for the 1961 desegregation of the University of Georgia. The *Clarion-Ledger*, the *Oxford Eagle* and *The Mississippian* newspapers were analyzed for the 1962 desegregation of the University of Mississippi. The *Birmingham News*, the *Tuscaloosa News* and the *Crimson White* newspapers were analyzed for the 1963 desegregation of the University of Alabama. Judgments of the favorability or legitimacy with which news articles and editorial content portrayed desegregations were made by the researcher and the content coded as being pro-desegregation, anti-desegregation, neutral or unclear. In Georgia and Alabama, less tumultuous university desegregations correlate to newspaper coverage that was mostly neutral or pro-desegregation. In Mississippi, a highly volatile university desegregation correlates to newspaper coverage that was often anti-desegregation in the news section and always anti-desegregation in the editorial pages, except in the case of *The Mississippian*. Historical analysis of the desegregations provides an additional framework for interpreting results.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my friends and family, who have always encouraged me and been sources of good humor. Most of all, this is dedicated to my mother, Meridith, for her love and support. Special thanks to Zelma, too, for always being there... and often with desserts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my advisor, Dr. Kathleen Wickham. Her feedback has always been insightful and has helped to motivate me through this undertaking. I also want to extend thanks to my other committee members, Dr. Samir Husni and Professor Joe Atkins, for their time and effort in helping me. Professor Atkins allowed me the gratifying duty of working as his graduate assistant, and has returned the favor with many recommendation letters.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the many scholars whom I cited throughout this work. Many of them were directly involved in the Civil Rights Movement, or served as front-line reporters during the waning days of Jim Crow, and their work has been enlightening, educational and moving.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
CHAPTERS	
ONE – INTRODUCTION.....	1
TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW.....	8
THREE – METHODOLOGY.....	97
FOUR – RESULTS.....	105
FIVE – CONCLUSION.....	133
APPENDIX.....	139
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	172
VITA.....	177

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

The American Civil Rights Movement, whose first phase is commonly held to have begun with *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 and ended around 1968 as the Black Power movement took precedence over peaceful, nonviolent protests associated with the earlier phase, is a defining era in recent American history. Its history, machinations and consequences have given rise to an entire academic discipline – African American studies – and also contributed to other academic disciplines, including Southern studies, journalism and communications studies.

Mississippi was a battleground during the Civil Rights Movement. At the time, Mississippi's economy was one based largely on agriculture, with 91.5 percent of Mississippians living in rural areas, according to the 1960 Census.¹ Though whites were not an overwhelming majority of the state's population in the 20th century – 58 percent in 1960² – they were the state's primary business and landowners. They controlled the economy both through that ownership and through racial segregation that presented blacks with fewer opportunities for prosperity – schools and education were second-rate compared to those for white pupils³ with black teachers earning less;⁴ certain jobs could only be held by whites; voting rights were denied to blacks; persistent pseudo-science supported white claims of black mental inferiority. Draconian Jim Crow laws that lingered after the Civil War ensured that cultural and economic segregation based on race

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. "United States Census 1960." 1960.

<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1960.html>

² Ibid.

³ Susan Weill, *In a Madhouse's Din: Civil Rights Coverage by Mississippi's Daily Press, 1948 – 1968* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002), p.x.

⁴ U.S. Department of the Interior. "Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the United States: Theme Study," 2000. p.64.

persisted for the benefit of the white-controlled economy. This was also true for all states in the American South, though the particulars of Jim Crow varied from place to place, from rural to urban, from Deep South toward the North.

The established order that had persisted for most of the South's post-Civil War history began to show cracks in its façade when black World War II veterans returned home from abroad and were disappointed to be denied the rights they felt they had earned abroad, their citizenship vetted in a foreign war.⁵ Those feelings began to be expressed by more and more blacks, exclusive of veteran status. Ethnic minorities in the United States had generally been very supportive of America's role in the war and returned with a commitment to securing a better future for themselves, informed in part by the egalitarian rhetoric of the wartime atmosphere.⁶

Expectations for access and equality, in the context of this inquiry, extended to educational opportunities. The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* – a decision which applied to five different cases, including a case in Virginia about an overpopulated, segregated black school – stated the “segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children. The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law; for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the Negro group.”⁷

The Supreme Court's ruling was flouted in much of the South. In the mid-20th century in the South, there was among many whites a lingering resentment toward the federal government, based not on dissatisfaction with taxation rates or other such minutiae that form the basis of contemporary perceptions of the federal government by state citizens, but rather on hundred-year-old cultural legend – that of a powerful North interfering with an agrarian South, razing its

⁵ Weill, p.21-22.

⁶ “Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the United States: Theme Study,” p.70.

⁷ *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

cities and dismantling its economy of slave labor. The Civil War was not as distant a memory then as it is today, with children of Confederate soldiers still living, among them then-Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett.⁸

That anti-federal bent of the whites of Mississippi received new life during 1962 when James Meredith became the first black student to successfully and openly integrate a public all-white university in Mississippi. In the run-up to his integration of the University of Mississippi, various legal decisions consistently held that he had the right as a citizen of Mississippi who met the academic criteria to be admitted to Ole Miss. Though the most likely endgame of Governor Barnett's attempts to delay Meredith's admission was clear to legal observers as well as Barnett, most of the twenty daily newspapers in Mississippi at that time misreported the facts of the legal decisions, of Meredith's history and of Barnett's power. Additionally, editorial columnists in these newspapers perpetuated the misinformation – both intentionally and unintentionally – through their written opinions that overwhelmingly supported Barnett and Jim Crow laws separating the races.

A chain of pathologies may be diagnosed to illustrate the interrelation of the threats perceived by white powerholders in Mississippi. At its core, the anti-federalism expressed during this time was a symptom of racism. Fears that the balance of power would be upset by federal intervention point back to racism – whites were willing to share power with one another, but not with blacks. If the primary motive for whites to resist was economic in nature, it was to keep blacks from earning a larger share. Even in a capitalist economy where survival of no one was guaranteed, blacks were specifically targeted first. There are also suggestions that a psychological fear of sexual domination of white women by empowered black men accounted

⁸ Raymond Arsenault, *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) p.626.

for some measure of the resistance. This interpretation also points to racism as the primary motive for resistance.

Because all roads lead back to racism, it is important to qualify what is meant by “racism,” which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as:

The belief that all members of each race possess characteristics, abilities, or qualities specific to that race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior to another race or races. Hence: prejudice and antagonism towards people of other races, esp. those felt to be a threat to one's cultural or racial integrity or economic well-being; the expression of such prejudice in words or actions. Also occasionally in extended use, with reference to people of other nationalities.⁹

Sociologist Ian Law gives further definition to the distinguishing characteristics of racism in news coverage, presuming the concept of race exists:

1. The signification of race characteristics to identify a collectivity
2. The attribution of such a group with negative biological or cultural characteristics
3. The designation of boundaries to specify inclusion and exclusion
4. Variation in form in that it may be a relatively coherent theory or a loose assembly of images and explanations
5. Its practical adequacy; in that it successfully “makes sense” of the world for those who articulate it. Its pleasures; “an unearned easy feeling of superiority and the facile cementing of group identity on the fragile basis of arbitrary antipathy.”¹⁰

Though Meredith successfully integrated the University of Mississippi on October 1, 1962, the occasion was marred by violent riots in which a journalist and a bystander were killed,

⁹ *Oxford English Dictionary*: “racism”. <http://www.oed.com>

¹⁰ Ian Law, *Race In the News*, (Hampshire, England: Palgrave, 2002) p.vi.

and in which the chaos was quelled by a force of federal U.S. marshals and federalized National Guardsmen at the behest of President Kennedy.

The Civil Rights era in Mississippi is known for its violence. Lynchings, fire bombings and intimidation were perhaps more numerous and systematic in Mississippi than in any other state. The chaotic integration of the University of Mississippi was additional instance of white resistance to equal rights of blacks. Of course, other Southern states experienced violence and opposition to integration during the Civil Rights Movement. The University of Georgia was integrated in 1961 with no great civil unrest. The University of Alabama, in a state as agrarian and thoroughly segregated as Mississippi, was integrated in 1963. Though there was some unrest, it did not spiral out of control as it at the University of Mississippi.

The particulars of each state's road toward integration varies, but one thing they all have in common is that desegregation of the flagship public university in Georgia (University of Georgia), Mississippi (University of Mississippi) and Alabama (University of Alabama) all took place during a common era. The University of Georgia was integrated after Kennedy's election and shortly before he was inaugurated, while the imprint of the Kennedy Administration was clearly left on the latter two desegregations. Proportionally, more people read the newspapers daily then than now.¹¹ Newspapers were also the dominant news media at the time, outstripping radio and television in numbers of consumers.¹² Editorials contributed to the public discourse – set the agenda – about integrations at the sacred cows of the University of Georgia, the University of Mississippi and University of Alabama, places where the white elite of each state was educated. The existence of a correlation between editorial content – either pro-, anti- or neutral-integration – and the magnitude of resistance to integration should be documented.

¹¹ Choire Sicha, "A Graphic History of Newspaper Circulation Over the Last Two Decades." 2009, October 26. *The Awl*. <http://www.theawl.com/2009/10/a-graphic-history-of-newspaper-circulation-over-the-last-two-decades>

¹² Charlotte Grimes, "Debate: Civil Rights and the Press," *Journalism Studies*, Volume 6, Number 1. (2005): p.120.

In Alabama, Governor George Wallace had a tight grip on security with assistance from papers promulgating his message to stay away. Georgia was probably more progressive culturally, since Governor Ernest Vandiver did not do much to ensure security, but only momentary unrest happened and was quickly quashed. Mississippi was a confluence of misinformation, reckless leadership and cultural opposition to black advancement.

In the researcher's view, there is a disconnect between the historic record and the cause for civil unrest. That is, even given the limitations placed on blacks during the Jim Crow era, the integration of a university was not reason enough for such a tense environment and feelings of inevitable conflict. Legal precedent provided for the desegregation of the universities, so it should have been a simple matter. But the egos of governors involved created obstacles, fed by cultural distrust of the federal government. Newspapers, as independent sources of information, should have fulfilled a role as a neutral informer on the front pages, while saving opinion for the editorial pages. In two of the three desegregation cases, this was the usually the case, however, in another, the large newspaper of record (*Clarion-Ledger*) acted as a mouthpiece of the government, with the local paper falling into line.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the content of newspapers that would have naturally had an interest in covering the desegregations of the three universities. By analyzing in-state newspapers' coverage and comparing them with the known outcomes of the desegregations at each university – orderly or tumultuous – some conclusions might be reached about the agenda-setting potential of newspapers. Neutral, objective news coverage paired with editorials that asked the readers to abstain from disorderly conduct might correlate to desegregations that were free of riots, violence and injuries. News coverage that is unbalanced and presents rumor and conjecture as fact, combined with editorials that painted the federal government as an

intruder in states' rights could correlate to social unrest that boiled over into riots. The specific research questions are: 1. Do the newspapers analyzed engage in agenda-setting via their coverage of the desegregations? 2. If so, are the agenda-setting effects measurable, either via a direct causal relationship or via correlation to the how the university desegregations were carried out?

Following this section, the literature review discusses prior research on the issue of agenda-setting in the media and the historical contexts of the desegregations of the flagship public university in each of the three states. Special depth is provided for the extensive legal wrangling and state government resistance in the case of the desegregation of the University of Mississippi both because it is the home university of the researcher and plentiful resources on the subject were available, as well as because more prior research has been done on this instance of integration than similar instances at other universities. The methodology section explains how the researcher carried out the content analysis and coded his results. The researcher's quantitative and qualitative analyses of newspapers during month-long survey periods are also included in the results section. The findings of the study are summarized and explained in the conclusions chapter.

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

Agenda-Setting Theory

Agenda-setting theory is the mass media theory paradigm that informs this analysis. According to Wayne Wanta, agenda setting is a form of social learning, one in which – in a mass media context – the news media give salience cues to the public, alerting them to the issues to which they should pay attention. The public, through repeated reception of those salience cues, believes that issues receiving more coverage are more important than issues receiving less coverage. The messages are internalized and an individual's cognition is affected, though research has yet to produce an explanation for exactly how this takes place and why a certain opinion on a subject is formed. It is influenced by many factors, including the education level of the individual, the social demographic into which he fits, his motivations to learn more about the issue, his past behavior patterns and so on.¹³

An antecedent to the current agenda-setting theory was laid out by influential journalist and media critic Walter Lippmann in his 1922 tome, *Public Opinion*. He addressed the metaphysical question of why individuals respond the way they do to certain stimuli. Lippmann said the real environment in which people exist is too complex and too fleeting for people to make rigorous observations, thus people create a simpler model in their minds and respond to those “pictures in their heads.” Bernard C. Cohen in 1963 developed the idea further, laying the basis for the 1972 publication that defined agenda-setting. Cohen wrote, “[The press] may not be

¹³ Wayne Wanta, *The Public and the National Agenda: How People Learn About Important Issues*, (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007) p.2.

successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think *about*.”¹⁴ Building upon Cohen’s writing, the agenda-setting theory was first laid out as such by Donald Shaw and Maxwell McCombs in 1972 when they analyzed the 1968 U.S. presidential campaign. Their research was the first empirical confirmation of Cohen’s idea that the press measurably influences people’s opinions.¹⁵

McCombs and Shaw’s research was conducted through interviews of 100 voters during the 1968 presidential race between Richard Nixon, Hubert Humphrey and George Wallace. In it, they sought to determine how issue salience – that is, the relative importance of particular issues such as race, monetary policy, the environment, education, and so forth, as they are defined and given coverage in the media – compared to the amount of coverage those issues were given in the media at the time.¹⁶ McCombs further clarifies the definition of issues in later writing:

In the abstract, the items that define the agenda are objects. The objects are the things on which the attention of the media and the public are focused. Each of these objects has numerous attributes, those characteristics and traits that describe the object... Which aspects of an issue are covered in the news – and the relative emphasis on these various aspects of an issue – makes a considerable difference in how people view that issue.¹⁷

McCombs and Shaw’s original 1968 research showed:

The correlation between the major item emphasis on the main campaign issues carried by the media and voters’ independent judgments of what were the important issues was +.967. In short, the data suggest a very strong relationship between the emphasis placed

¹⁴ Stanley J. Baran & Dennis K. Davis, *Mass Communications Theory: Foundations, Ferment and Future*, (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006). p.316.

¹⁵ Ibid, p.317.

¹⁶ Ibid, p.317.

¹⁷ Maxwell McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2004) p.5.

on different campaign issues by the media...and the judgments of voters as to the salience and importance of various campaign topics.¹⁸

Lippmann's original statement about human cognitive limitations was made in the context of politics, and as the theory of agenda-setting has been further refined, politics and societal trends relating to politics have remained the focus of agenda-setting. McCombs and Shaw stated that political reality is shaped by what news editors, reporters and broadcasters chose to communicate to the public. Also important to the agenda-setting function of the press is the amount of coverage given to an issue – either in inches of newsprint or minutes of airtime.¹⁹ A potential theoretical weakness, at least in early agenda-setting research, was pointed out by McCombs in the initial 1972 publication. Their results implied there was a causal relationship in the direction of news coverage of an issue influencing how people perceived issue salience. McCombs acknowledged that, instead, it could simply be reflective of the news media being adept at providing their audience with the coverage they want, which could be demonstrated by the very high correlation.²⁰ McCombs wrote three decades later in 2004 that more than 300 agenda-setting studies worldwide had documented agenda-setting function of the media, with a majority demonstrating correlations of +.50 or better, thus fortifying his position that news media influence opinion.²¹ It would be an extraordinary coincidence for news media to be so accurately tuned to the desires of their audiences, especially given the decline of newspaper subscriptions in recent decades, which would demonstrate the converse.

Shanto Iyengar and Donald Kinder added the concept of “priming” – the idea that media coverage is a zero-sum game, giving coverage to some issues at the expense of other issues – to

¹⁸ Baran, p.317.

¹⁹ Ibid, p.317.

²⁰ Ibid, p.318.

²¹ Maxwell McCombs, “The Agenda-Setting Role of the Mass Media in the Shaping of Public Opinion,” http://www.infoamerica.org/documentos_pdf/mccombs01.pdf (2003) p.3.

the agenda-setting model. Iyengar and Kinder demonstrated a causal relationship between media coverage and the salience people assign to issues by measuring test subjects' responses to edited and unedited broadcasts. Subjects exposed to the more dramatically edited broadcasts assigned the issues greater salience for the national interest. Iyengar and Kinder found, too, that dramatically presented television news stories undermined that medium's agenda-setting power by focusing too much on individuals or specific situations rather than on the societal implications for an issue.²² That observation by Iyengar and Kinder assumes that the television news broadcasters were following the social responsibility theory of the press, and desired for their audiences to be well informed and not just to be gripped enough by drama to stay tuned in through the advertisements. In the context of this examination of agenda-setting in newspapers during university desegregations, the predilection of some newspapers to frame news and editorials in a dramatic fashion focused on individuals – Mississippi governor Ross Barnett versus instigator/NAACP pawn James Meredith and the intrusive Kennedy brothers, as it was framed by *The Clarion-Ledger* – and the effects it has on setting the agenda of the readership is one of the possibilities that is explored. The other possibility is that news and editorial coverage in other newspapers was framed within a larger societal context – Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes are justly seeking to matriculate at the University of Georgia, and society will not crumble because of it, as it was framed by *The Atlanta Constitution* – and had different agenda-setting effects on those readerships. A desire for social responsibility, as defined by that theory of the press, on the parts of the newspapers is not assumed in the cases examined in this study.

Iyengar and Kinder also found that the position of a story affected the power of its agenda-setting potential. Lead stories in television news had greater agenda-setting effects than

²² Baran, p.318.

stories that came later in a broadcast.²³ The researcher, for lack of direct evidence cited in other research, assumes this property of television news agenda-setting is transitive for prints news, as well. That is, front-page news has a greater agenda-setting potential than news found on subsequent pages in a news section. As television viewers believed the salience for society was greater for stories presented earlier in the broadcast, so, too, did readers believe front-page news held greater salience than news on later pages. McCombs did address in general terms the salience cues that newspapers employ, saying that headline size and story placement on page one are indicative of the emphasis the newspaper staff wish to place on the content.²⁴

McCombs also added to Lippmann's original thesis by stating that the basic psychological tendency of humans to reduce overwhelming information about the environment into more easily digestible bits is not just a habit, but an innate biological need for orientation. The need for orientation is defined by "relevance" of an issue to an individual and "uncertainty" of the individual about the outcome.²⁵ How closely an individual monitors news coverage of an issue depends on the combination of levels of relevance and uncertainty. For instance, an issue with high relevance, but about which the outcome is relatively certain to the individual, will result in low monitoring of the issue in the news by that individual. On the other hand, high relevance and high uncertainty will result in a great need for orientation for the individual.²⁶ It is the postulation of the researcher that in the early 1960s in the southern United States, the potential for mortal blows being dealt to unconstitutional Jim Crow segregation by federal courts caused the cases profiled in this study to be regarded with high relevance by the populations of those states. A public university desegregation would be a gradual, but also immutable, step

²³ Ibid, p.318.

²⁴ McCombs, p.1.

²⁵ Ibid, p.9.

²⁶ Ibid, p.10.

toward ending segregation in its totality, thus eventually affecting everyone. It is also the researcher's postulation that uncertainty was also high. In each case, the governors of each state made, at the least, overtures toward resisting federal court rulings that mandated public university desegregation. In the case of Mississippi, the resistance was taken further. The maneuvers by the governors – and in some instances, the news and editorial coverage of the litigation provided by newspapers – contributed to atmospheres of uncertainty, despite the clarity of federal court orders and the mandate of federal courts defined by the U.S. Constitution that ultimately settled all the cases.

The findings of McCombs and Shaw in 1972 and further research in the field led to McCombs categorizing agenda-setting research into four phases:

1. Initial examination of the agenda-setting process.
2. Exploration of the contingent conditions that enhance or inhibit agenda-setting effects.
3. Exploration of candidate images and political interest as alternative agendas.
4. Research into factors and parties affecting the press' agenda.²⁷

Of the above four categories this analysis fits with the (second category) because this study explores the then-current social and historical contexts surrounding each university desegregation, as well as the vigor or neutrality with which newspapers reported and commented upon the desegregations. This analysis also contributes to the study of agenda-setting influences of the news media vis-à-vis the civil rights issue, which was begun by Winter and Eyal in their 1981 study. In this subset of agenda-setting research, analysis is concerned with the issue of the

²⁷ Wanta, p.3.

presentation of civil rights issues in the media and not on the individuals' level of concern with civil rights.²⁸

Overview of university segregation prior to 1960s

The complexity and thoroughness with which social segregation of blacks and whites was carried out in the South is hard to understate. Every aspect of public life was subject to division along racial lines. Education and religious worship took place separately. Businesses catered to one racial clientele or another. Certain jobs were usually filled a person of appropriate ethnicity – doctors and lawyers, for instance, were mostly white – with rare exceptions. Segregation extended even to the rules of the road. If two cars, one driven by a white and one by a black, came to an intersection simultaneously, the white person had the right-of-way. Whites held the higher social and economic positions in the divided society, with blacks occupying a subservient positions. Jim Crow was clearly present at the South's public universities, like in all other social institutions.

University-level higher education was a rarity for most of American society, and even more rare for black Americans for most of the country's history. The application of black Americans to and their eventual desegregation of public universities is often framed in popular culture as a heroic civil rights struggle. That is a part of the narrative, to be sure, but the underlying motivations for desegregation that led to dramatic episodes such as the University of Mississippi's violent desegregation and the tense stand of George Wallace at the University of Alabama began a century earlier with the establishment of federal land-grant colleges in 1862. Because slavery was still a reality in 1862, higher education of blacks was not considered in the establishment of these state schools. That was corrected in 1890 with new regulations that

²⁸ Ibid, p.11.

required black students benefit from federal funds appropriated to states for higher education.²⁹

In the South, this manifested itself as the establishment of black colleges, which, like their whites-only land-grant counterparts provided students with agriculture-centric education. Predictably these black colleges had inferior facilities and funding compared to the white colleges but the system of duplicated curriculums persisted through most of the 20th century until the post-World War II era when the dearth of programs at the 1890-established schools became intolerable to black students seeking to become educated in a wide variety of disciplines that would be of increasing importance in a modernizing, post-agricultural economy.³⁰ Black students who desired to become white-collar professionals with thorough humanities training were left with few choices. One choice was to seek education out-of-state at higher cost to themselves, though it was a law that their home states had to make up the difference in tuition costs under “separate but equal” legislation. This route was less than desirable because there was no guarantee of acceptance to their desired program, nor of the state deeming the out-of-state program to be acceptably different from a cheaper in-state program at a black college, thus resulting in a denial of funds. Another obvious drawback is that an out-of-state university usually meant they were a greater distance from home, causing additional hardships for students. The alternative, then, was to apply to an in-state program at a white university. Such an applicant was most often subject to instant disregard in many states, and court battles ensued. The drawbacks of application to white universities are apparent in a case such as James Meredith’s – enormous waves were made in Mississippi society and two bystanders died as a result, with Meredith requiring constant federal protection during his tenure at Ole Miss. A less obvious drawback is the waste of time and resources on the part of the applicant. Even after the densest period of

²⁹ Peter Wallenstein, ed., *Higher Education and the Civil Rights Movement: White Supremacy, Black Southerners, and College Campuses*, (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2008), p.5.

³⁰ Ibid, p.5.

university desegregations in the 1960s, most blacks continued to attend historically black colleges and universities given the individual nature of desegregations – in Mississippi, it was not until 1965 that the state stopped opposing each black applicant’s attempts to enter a white university on an individual basis – and the lack of outreach on the part of white universities to potential black students.³¹

Jim Crow-era laws and customs provided a high barrier to entry for the black applicant, though it is interesting to note that non-black minorities received a break on the issue of state university enrollment. Chinese Mississippians were allowed to enroll in white universities starting in the 1930s. The University of Mississippi, one of the universities included in this analysis, had its first student of Chinese descent in 1960. Mississippi State College (now Mississippi State University) integrated its first Chinese student even earlier in 1945.³² In fact, by the time of the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling in 1954, only Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida and South Carolina had not yet begun to enroll black students in non-black public institutions of higher learning.³³ Those five lingering states of university segregation in 1954 may be contrasted with the seventeen states that maintained total educational segregation between 1890 and 1935.³⁴ These twelve states that desegregated their institutions of higher learning, though, did not necessarily do so voluntarily. A series of court cases beginning in Maryland in 1935 began to chip away at the legal foundations for “separate but equal” university education for blacks in the South. United States Supreme Court decisions followed that made integrated higher education compulsory for every state in the country.

³¹ *Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the United States: Theme Study*, p.84.

³² Wallenstein, p.7.

³³ *Ibid*, p.12.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p.4.

A 1938 Missouri case involving a black man, Lloyd Gaines, applying for law school in the state resulted in a ruling that any state that offers a law school education to whites could not require that black students go out of state to obtain the same training. The state covering the cost of out-of-state tuition for black students who wished to receive education in a degree not offered at an in-state black college was common practice at the time, and in fact, figures into the desegregation of the University of Georgia. A series of 1950 cases brought about by district attorneys in Oklahoma (*McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education*) and Texas (*Sweatt v. Painter*) reinforced the 1938 Missouri ruling by banning segregation of black students in classrooms and libraries once they had already been admitted to a university.³⁵ The landmark rulings in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 and 1955 eliminated the legal argument of “separate but equal” under which state governments could institute segregation at public elementary and secondary schools. This case also set the stage for university desegregation by allowing challenges to the next logical step of desegregation of public learning institutions – state universities.³⁶

Though the three states in this analysis chose not to be proactive about university desegregation in the face of an ever-shrinking legal basis for segregation, other states reacted to the writing on the wall by loosening their rules for black acceptance to state universities. West Virginia, Delaware and Arkansas began to admit some black applicants as graduate students absent court orders to do so. These states, though, only made concessions in lock-step with court rulings, not broadening their enrollment policies further than courts had mandated in other cases. West Virginia began greater acceptance of blacks to some programs in response to the 1938 Gaines case. Delaware and Arkansas’s new policies were a response to a 1948 Oklahoma case.

³⁵ *Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the United States: Theme Study*, p.84.

³⁶ Wallenstein, p.21.

All three of these states also limited black applicants to certain programs, and did not practice broad-based acceptance of black applicants until later court action set precedence for nondiscriminatory admission. By 1955, all six states of the border South – Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri and Oklahoma – had begun to admit black undergraduates regardless of majors.³⁷

It is worth providing some additional context for the resistance of Georgia, Mississippi and Alabama in the form of other southern universities that admitted black undergraduates and graduate students with much less fanfare than the three involved in this analysis:

- University of Tennessee: Theotis Robinson, Jr.; Charles Edgar Blair – admitted in January 1961.
- Clemson University: Harvey Gantt – admitted January 1961.
- University of Florida: integrated in September 1962.
- Texas A&M: a black graduate student and undergraduate were admitted in June 1963.
- Louisiana State University: black undergraduates were admitted under court order to the Baton Rouge campus June 1964.³⁸
- Mississippi State University: Richard E. Holmes – admitted July 1965.

The University of Georgia

Among the three universities profiled, the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia, was the first to desegregate on January 11, 1961. The university was at the time, and remains today, the largest public university in the University System of Georgia, and, like the University of Mississippi and the University of Alabama, may be described as the flagship school its

³⁷ Ibid, p.22.

³⁸ Ibid, p.35.

respective state. Located 70 miles from Atlanta, the largest and capital city of Georgia, Athens in 1961 was a small city of 33,500 people.³⁹ Its location near a major metropolitan center, and the relatively near influence of urbane Atlanta likely provided a moderating influence on the level of upheaval that was experienced during the desegregation of the University of Georgia. Because Atlanta had a large black professional class – in contrast to more agrarian Mississippi and Alabama – and the state newspaper of record, *The Atlanta Constitution*, was editorially firmly on the side of desegregation of the university, the idea of desegregation was more palatable.

Horace T. Ward – The First Attempt

The 1961 matriculation of black students Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes was not the first attempt by black applicants to desegregate the University of Georgia. The first known attempt occurred in September 1950 when Horace T. Ward, a graduate of Morehouse College with an additional master's from Atlanta University – both historically black colleges – applied for admission to the University of Georgia's law school. The qualifier of “first known attempt” is important because there is anecdotal evidence of students of African descent surreptitiously enrolling at the three universities profiled in this study, but whose skin tones were light enough that their true heritage was not detected by white schoolmates or administrators. Ward, though, applied openly as a black candidate at the behest of William Madison Boyd, the president of Georgia's chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the chair of the political science department at Atlanta University.⁴⁰

The influence and assistance of the NAACP in all three desegregation cases profiled in this study cannot be understated. While many segregationists at this time denounced the NAACP as a communist organization, the professional legal aid that the NAACP provided to those

³⁹ U.S. Census Bureau.

⁴⁰ Edward A. Hatfield, *Desegregation of Public Education*, <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-3616&sug=y> (2008, May 28).

students seeking entry to white universities proved crucial not only to navigating legal obstacles for entry, but also to providing those applicants with psychological support in the face of the monolithic state governments opposing their entry to white universities.

The NAACP chose to focus on breaking down the color barrier at white public universities first instead of at the primary school level because they believed that the legal battles in higher education would be less protracted. The NAACP felt the ramifications of one or two black students integrating white universities would be less acutely felt by the populace of a given state than if all primary schools were suddenly and comprehensively desegregated. The focus on white universities, they thought, would allow the segregated populaces, especially the more powerful white portion, to acclimate to change and provoke fewer negative responses during a controlled demolition of Jim Crow.⁴¹

Ward's attempt for acceptance to the university's law school was met with immediate denial. In order to deter future black applicants from attempting to chip away at the flimsy legal basis for denial of black applicants to the university, the Board of Regents, which by 1951 included Georgia state representative and "kingmaker" Roy V. Harris, instituted new admissions requirements that included a new battery of entrance exams and, common for insular southern colleges at the time, letters of recommendation from alumni.⁴² The rationale for the latter requirement was clear – because no black University of Georgia alumni existed, it stood to reason that any white alumnus progressive enough to give his vote of confidence to a black applicant would have to take pause before doing so. The cultural and economic climate in the South at the time meant that knowledge of the endorsement would likely become public and the alumnus' business and personal prospects would suffer.

⁴¹ Robert A. Pratt, *We Shall Not Be Moved*, (Athens, GA: University Press of Georgia, 2002), p.ix.

⁴² Robert A. Pratt, *Horace T. Ward*, <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-880&sug=y> (2003, May 9).

However, it was not legal to deny black applicants the opportunity to study a discipline for which there was no analogue at an in-state black college, law in this case. *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the regressive 1896 U.S. Supreme Court decision that created Jim Crow and its attendant segregationist policies, held that white and black segments of society could remain separate so long as they were also equal in public funding and facilities. While this decision provided for separate primary and higher education in the South, it did nothing for improving the efficiency of education budgets. To this end, black public universities generally lacked complete redundancy of white programs of study at the university level. Rather than expend finite resources on constructing, in Horace Ward's case, a black school of law in the state of Georgia, the state provided vouchers for black students to study an unavailable in-state program in another state that would accept the black applicant.⁴³

Though this practice was ruled unconstitutional in a series of federal court cases between 1936 and 1950, it continued in Georgia as late as 1961.⁴⁴ Though Georgia resisted the federal court rulings, it is important to note that the federal judiciary was more liberal than it had been years prior, an enduring legacy of the administration of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and one that would play a role in the federal backing of black applicants at other schools during the 1960s. This more liberal judiciary, especially the Supreme Court, began to gradually strike blows against racial discrimination in education as early as 1944 in a case in which Texas' all-white primary was ruled unconstitutional. In spite of the more progressive nature of the judiciary, each instance of racial discrimination would have to be tackled individually for the next two decades until the passage of the Civil Rights act of 1964.⁴⁵ During the 1951-1952 session, the Georgia state legislature also passed legislation that provided for cutting off state funds to any

⁴³ Pratt (2002), p.28.

⁴⁴ <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-3616&sug=y>

⁴⁵ Pratt (2002), p.2.

white public university that admitted a black student, which would come into play a decade later.⁴⁶

The application of Ward, of Lagrange, Georgia, though initially rejected out of hand by the university, was not dropped thanks to determination on the part of Ward and his legal team, which included Georgia lawyers A.T. Walden and Donald Hollowell, along with Constance Baker Motley, Thurgood Marshall and Robert L. Carter from the NAACP's Legal Defense and Education Fund.⁴⁷ Three years after his application Ward was given a federal court date for appeal of the University of Georgia's denial of his application. In the months leading up to the October 1953 hearing two newspapers that are included in this study of later undergraduate desegregation, *The Atlanta Constitution* and *The Red & Black*, the weekly student newspaper of the University of Georgia, entered the editorial fray to comment upon Ward's predicament. State Rep. Roy V. Harris played the role of antagonist.

Harris was a 1919 graduate of the University of Georgia's law school who was elected to the state legislature in 1921 at age 26 and also twice served as Speaker of the House.⁴⁸ He was a life-long lawyer and politician whose kingmaker reputation came from his management of three successful gubernatorial campaigns. A former law partner from his practice in Augusta described him as "the planner. A behind-the-scenes, smoke-filled room guy."⁴⁹ In addition to these roles, he was also a race-baiter and demagogue who owned *The Augusta Courier* newspaper and used it as a platform for spreading his segregationist ideals, including the following sample from October 2, 1950, of the sort of pseudoscientific and historical revisionist thought that was commonly espoused in papers of the period:

⁴⁶ <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-3616&sug=y>

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Pratt (2002), p.31.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.31.

The negroes have made greater progress in this country than any other place on this earth. Were it not for the effort of the white people and for what the white man had done for the negro, the negro would still be a naked savage in the jungles of Africa.⁵⁰

Harris, as a segregationist and a member of the university's Board of Regents, became embroiled in a battle with the editors of *The Red & Black* when they expressed support for acceptance of Ward's application: "There is absolutely no logic in excluding the Negro from the white man's way of life, especially at a university."⁵¹ This October 8, 1953, editorial statement titled "The Color is Black" expressed a progressive sentiment politically at odds with the state Democratic establishment. The Democratic Party of Georgia on November 2, 1952, had sponsored a full-page ad in the *Constitution* during that year's gubernatorial contest that told white Georgians, "This is your last chance to help defend yourself and uphold the heritage and traditions [segregation] of Georgia. The threat to our schools and colleges is now."⁵²

Harris responded with a letter to the editor of the *Red & Black* in which he wrote: "Rather than sissy activities like writing for a school paper, y'all ought to be out playing football or doing something really macho."⁵³ The opposition of the editors of the paper to the policies of then Governor Herman Talmadge caused Harris to publicly run editorials in his own paper rebuking their views. He privately threatened to use his influence on the Board of Regents to threaten to suspend publication of the student newspaper, which was at that time still published on campus and subsidized by university funds. The editor-in-chief of *The Red & Black*, Walter Lundy, and his managing editor, Bill Shipp, responded by running a story of Harris' private attempts to cow

⁵⁰ Maurice C. Daniels, *Horace T. Ward: Desegregation of the University of Georgia, Civil Rights Advocacy, and Jurisprudence*, (Atlanta: Clark Atlanta University Press, 2001), p.50.

⁵¹ Pratt (2002), p.31.

⁵² Daniels, p.49.

⁵³ Pratt (2002), p.34.

the editors into compliance.⁵⁴ The embarrassment of Harris raised his ire even further, prompting him to rally the support of the University of Georgia Board of Regents to pressure Lundy and Shipp into resignation through increased university faculty oversight and the use of Board of Regents-approved content designed to squelch the dissenting opinion among the student paper's leadership.⁵⁵

Lundy, who resigned, remarked, "I cannot conscientiously remain in the position of editor without expounding my views on the charges of Harris."⁵⁶ Shipp said they were denied "the right to reply to charges and names hurled at us [by Harris]."⁵⁷

The Red & Black editors received support for their stance. Letters to the editor came mostly from journalists and others not related to the university, along with a few from alumni, but they had little vocal support from University of Georgia undergraduates and law students.⁵⁸ While most support originated from outside the region, an important proponent of the student editors' stance was Ralph McGill, the liberal editor-in-chief of *The Atlanta Constitution*, and the man who would become known as the "Conscience of the South," for his progressive views on segregation.⁵⁹

The *Red & Black* case raised the level of antagonism between Harris and McGill, the latter of whom was a prominent, popular liberal voice in a state whose white citizens still overwhelmingly supported segregation.⁶⁰ Though McGill at the time of Ward's application to the University of Georgia law school was a proponent of gradual integration of public schools and other facilities – and had set a precedent by being the first newspaper editor in the South to

⁵⁴ Daniels, p.58.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.59.

⁵⁶ Pratt (2002), p.34.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p.34.

⁵⁸ Daniels, p.61.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p.54.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.53.

capitalize the word “Negro” in print⁶¹ – his opposition to Harris and conservative Democrats would be important nearly a decade later when he used his widely read platform to call for Governor Ernest Vandiver to adhere to federal judgments in favor of the admission of two black undergraduate students to the university without resistance and without cutting off university funds.

Black coverage in the mainstream press

The mere fact that McGill and the student editors addressed the issue of black admission to the university with measured rationale was highly unusual in the South at the time, for the lives of black Americans were largely ignored in the pages of newspapers. In their book *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation*, Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff noted the treatment of the black segment of society by white newspapers:

For the most part [newspapers] treated Negro communities as a creepy corner of the world not worthy of their readers’ time. Many newspapers didn’t carry any news at all about Negroes; some printed only social snippets under such headlines as ‘Activities of Colored People.’ And some devoted a full page to Negro news, in editions circulated only in Negro neighborhoods...The papers didn’t carry Negro wedding announcements or obituaries.⁶²

That was in the best case. Also common was the practice of referring to blacks with generic, derogatory pseudonyms, as well as airbrushing blacks out of photographs.⁶³ Though few empirical studies have been done on the coverage of blacks in mainstream newspapers during the two decades following the end of World War II through the end of the Jim Crow era, those

⁶¹ Gene Roberts & Hank Klibanoff, *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation*, (New York: Vintage, 2007) p.29.

⁶² Ibid, p.55.

⁶³ Ibid, p.55.

studies all indicate that coverage of black issues was inadequate compared to whites.⁶⁴ In more recent years journalism professor Carolyn Martindale of Youngstown State University wrote that the mainstream press during the entirety of the Civil Rights Movement had failed to explain “the disenfranchisement of black citizens in the South, Jim Crow laws, economic and educational inequality, discrimination in hiring and housing, oppression by law enforcement officers, inadequate city services and schools in black inner city neighborhoods.”⁶⁵

The Ward case – as an outlier, deviating from the norm of the sort of news coverage of black issues that appeared in the mainstream press – took place before the first of three phases of the Civil Rights Movement by which time it had coalesced into a recognizable effort on the part of blacks to secure benefits of citizenship.

It is important to understand the different phases as lenses through which to view the press’ coverage of Ward first and the later successful desegregation attempts at the University of Georgia, the University of Mississippi and the University of Alabama.

The first phase took place between 1954, the year of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling that outlawed school segregation, and 1960. Because Ward’s attempt took place before this phase, his case seemed to be viewed largely as a curiosity by the mainstream press and had not yet taken on the edge of something that threatened white dominance, as later attempts would.

The second phase – and the one with which this study is primarily concerned – occurred between 1960 and 1964 and was characterized by sit-ins and growing public demonstrations in favor of desegregation of public facilities. As will be demonstrated later in analysis of the content of newspapers during the three successful desegregation attempts in this second phase,

⁶⁴ Margaret A. Blanchard, ed., *History of the Mass Media in the United States: An Encyclopedia*, (New York: Routledge, 1998), p.376.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p.374.

the aura of curiosity that accompanied Ward's attempt gave way to feelings of desperation and superiority among those opposed to desegregation of white universities versus rationality and inevitability among those in favor of desegregation. It was during the second phase that the press was viewed by many in the Civil Rights Movement as being allies of the movement.

The third phase occurred following the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and is outside the purview of this study.⁶⁶

But for Ward back in the early 1950s, the support of *The Red & Black* and McGill suddenly became a moot point. In 1953 Ward was drafted into the U.S. Army – with some questioning the convenient timing of the notice – and served for two years. In the meantime, the landmark decision *Brown v. Board of Education*, was handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court, the strongest knock against the Jim Crow structure legitimized by *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Despite the ruling, southern states resisted by adhering to their discriminatory standards for admissions, including the requirement of alumni endorsement.

Ward renewed his application in 1955 after he was discharged from the Army, but enrolled at Northwestern University law school in Illinois in 1956 before the case went to trial. Tired of putting his legal education on hold any further, his enrollment at Northwestern nullified his case in Georgia. The University of Georgia also claimed that he was not qualified for admission because his prior colleges, Morehouse and Atlanta University, were not accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, though no black colleges were accredited by that organization at the time.⁶⁷ Ward would later use his legal training to assist in the desegregation of the university by working on the legal team of Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.373.

⁶⁷ Donald L. Grant, *The Way It Was In The South: The Black Experience in Georgia* (New York: Birch Lane Press, 1993), p.382.

Brown v. Board of Education

The case of *Brown v. Board of Education* is significant in the context of this study because it provided not only a true federal precedent for the desegregation of public universities, but also because it was the legal victory upon which the rest of the African American Civil Rights Movement laid. Whereas in 1950 Horace Ward had to navigate state-level legal waters to apply for entrance to the University of Georgia, the Supreme Court *Brown* decision changed the laws in Georgia and the rest of the country to make segregated education illegal. The decision formed the legal basis for the successful desegregations at all three universities in this study.

The other side of the coin, however, is that it raised the specter of a too-powerful federal government in the eyes of many people in the South. It caused segregationists to entrench themselves and form the White Citizens' Council – later officially called the Citizens' Councils of America, though the original name endures – and for violent opposition to Washington among the more extreme elements of conservative southern society.⁶⁸ In real terms, it also had the unintended consequence of making university admission more difficult for black applicants. The university made its acceptance requirements more difficult for blacks to achieve in response to *Brown* and the feared onslaught of black applicants.⁶⁹

In terms of the newspaper press in Georgia, McGill had written a famous editorial in 1953 entitled “One Day It Will Be Monday” in which he predicted an eventual U.S. Supreme Court ruling that would outlaw segregation.⁷⁰ It was his support of *Brown* that saw him take a more prominent position as a journalist of note in the nation at large and a voice of reason in the

⁶⁸ Jack Nelson, Nieman Reports: Reporting on the Civil Rights Movement.

<http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/100991/Reporting-on-the-Civil-Rights-Movement.aspx>

⁶⁹ Grant, p.378.

⁷⁰ Millard B. Grimes, *The Last Linotype: The Story of Georgia and its Newspapers Since World War II* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985), p.89.

South.⁷¹ At the University of Georgia, the new editors of *The Red & Black* also supported the ruling, writing, “The Constitution of the United States has taken on a new and fuller meaning of freedom with this latest interpretation.”⁷²

Hunter and Holmes – Desegregation Achieved

The *Brown* ruling was an enormous blow to Jim Crow laws, and its legitimacy was challenged by policy makers at the state level, including Ernest Vandiver, the governor of Georgia in 1961 when the University of Georgia was desegregated. Vandiver, a career Democratic politician, was elected governor in 1958 on a segregationist platform with a slogan of “No, not one” in reference to his vow to disallow segregation of public facilities in Georgia. In a foreshadowing of the sort of tactics that would be deployed in future university desegregation battles, Vandiver also promised to employ state highway patrolmen and national guard troops as armed enforcers of his policies.⁷³ Though Vandiver himself never resorted to this tactic, his strongest lever in the question of maintaining segregation in Georgia came in the form a law passed by the Georgia General Assembly in 1956 that allowed for state funds to be cut off to any school that was desegregated.⁷⁴ While he was the least obstructionist of the three governors in this study, Vandiver displayed the common trait of viewing external parties as being the primary threats to the universities in question. “Let us hope the NAACP will not force the closing of a single school,” he told state legislators in January 1960.⁷⁵

Into this legislative atmosphere came University of Georgia undergraduate applicants Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes. Hunter and Holmes were both children of black

⁷¹ Leonard R. Teel, *Ralph Emerson McGill: Voice of the Southern Conscience* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), p.282.

⁷² Pratt (2002), p.41.

⁷³ Ibid, p.68.

⁷⁴ Celebrating Courage: 50th Anniversary of Desegregation at UGA.
<http://www.uga.edu/news/desegregation/2000program/index.html> (2011).

⁷⁵ Grant, p.380.

middle-class professionals. Charlayne Hunter was daughter of an Army chaplain – an officer – and was active in extracurricular and honors activities at Atlanta’s Henry McNeal Turner High School, the top black high school in Atlanta. Because she was interested in pursuing journalism, Hunter applied to out-of-state schools because the flagship journalism program in the state was out of her reach at the segregated university.⁷⁶

Hamilton Holmes, her classmate and valedictorian of their 1959 graduating class, was likewise a standout at the segregated high school. Like Hunter, Holmes was the son of a member of the black professional class – a prominent Atlanta doctor – and was active in extracurricular activities at Turner High. Holmes had intended to apply to Morehouse College in Atlanta as a pre-med major, but he and Hunter both caught the attention of Jesse Hill, a member of the NAACP’s education committee, which sought outstanding black students who would be likely to break the color barrier at segregated universities. Hill originally wanted Hunter and Holmes to apply to Georgia State College of Business Administration (later to become Georgia State University), but Holmes felt that the University of Georgia had a better selection of classes for his pre-med major.⁷⁷

After their graduation from high school, they both applied to the University of Georgia in 1959, but were denied for “tardiness,” the first of several bureaucratic tactics the school would employ to maintain segregation. The excuse of additional procedural errors and dormitories filled to capacity would comprise the bulk of the university’s attempts to dissuade the pair from continuing to seek admission. But their NAACP legal team composed of Donald Hollowell, Constance Baker Motley, Vernon Jordan and Horace Ward persevered with additional attempts each quarter through September 1960. In the intervening year, Hunter and Holmes did not delay

⁷⁶ Charlayne Hunter-Gault, *In My Place* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1992), p.123.

⁷⁷ Amanda Nash, *Hamilton Holmes*, <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-1225&sug=y> (2005, August 19).

their continuing educations on principle as Ward had done a decade earlier. Hunter was admitted to Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, while Holmes began his studies at Morehouse.

In September 1960, Hollowell and Motley filed for an injunction that sought to prohibit the university from “refusing to consider [Hunter’s and Holmes’] applications and those of other Negro residents of Georgia for admission to the University.” Judge William Bootle, an Eisenhower-appointed judge for the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Georgia, ordered that a full trial be held in order to determine if Holmes and Hunter were sufficiently qualified for admission to the University of Georgia. Suddenly, on January 6, 1961, three weeks into the trial in which university registrar Walter Danner was the defendant, Bootle concluded the 18-month legal battle and ruled in favor of the applicants. In his decision in *Holmes v. Danner* Bootle said the applicants “are fully qualified for immediate admission,” adding they “would already have been admitted had it not been for their race and color.”⁷⁸

Though this seemingly definitively cleared the way for Hunter and Holmes to attend classes, there was an air of uncertainty about the sort of reactions to expect, both from the government of Georgia as well as the populace. In the immediate wake of Bootle’s ruling, student leaders at the university implored the student population to remain calm, though the night of the ruling a small crowd burned crosses in protest on the northern part of the university campus.⁷⁹ The next day an effigy of Holmes was hung at one of the entrances to campus, though Dean of Men William Tate broke up the group and confiscated student identification cards to demonstrate how serious the university was about maintaining order.⁸⁰

The official response of Governor Vandiver was also still unsettled. On January 7, Vandiver dispatched Attorney General A.G. Cook to district court to file a motion for a stay in

⁷⁸ Joseph D. McNair, *Racism*, <http://faculty.mdc.edu/jmcnair/EDG2701%20All%20Classes/Racism.htm>. (2004).

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Pratt (2002), p.84.

Bootle's ruling, which Bootle accepted and for which he scheduled a hearing on Monday, January 9. Bootle stayed his own ruling because he decided the state deserved an opportunity to appeal the ruling. At the same time, University of Georgia President O.C. Aderhold held a press conference declaring that the university was prepared to enroll Hunter and Holmes, demonstrating a lack of collusion between the office of the governor and the president of the university. Meanwhile, Vandiver was considering his options, namely that state law required him to cut funding to the university if it integrated. On the morning of January 9, Hunter and Holmes officially registered at the University of Georgia.⁸¹

The legal team representing the two applicants quickly moved to have the stay overturned by appealing to Judge Elbert Tuttle, a liberal Republican and chief judge of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, which then included Georgia. Tuttle ruled that Bootle's stay was "improvidently granted," causing Vandiver's legal team to make a last-ditch petition to the U.S. Supreme Court on January 10 to halt the desegregation. Attorneys Hollowell and Motley had already delivered a motion to the U.S. Supreme Court to have the desegregation proceed, ultimately resulting in the state's motion being denied.⁸² Vandiver's last option was to follow Georgia law and cut off state funds to university, drawing the ire of the populace of Georgia and causing Vandiver to publicly appeal to the state legislature to repeal the law.⁸³

The response from students was immediate and vocal – roughly 1,000 students protested in the streets, some waving Confederate flags, with two students arrested.⁸⁴ More peacefully, hundreds of students signed a petition against withdrawing state funds and the closure of the university. Judge Bootle settled the question of cutoffs by enjoining Vandiver from doing so,

⁸¹ <http://www.uga.edu/news/desegregation/2000program/index.html>.

⁸² <http://faculty.mdc.edu/jmcnair/EDG2701%20All%20Classes/Racism.htm>.

⁸³ Pratt (2002), p.90.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

thus opening the doors of the university to Hunter and Holmes.⁸⁵ By the afternoon of the 10th, Hunter and Holmes arrived in Athens to celebrate at the residence of the Hollowells, but were given a cold welcome by students chanting, “two-four-six-eight, we don 't want to integrate.” The pair officially began classes on the morning of Wednesday, January 11, 1961, with the day passing uneventfully until that evening.⁸⁶

Per university rules, Hunter, as a single female, had to live in a dormitory on campus; Holmes lived off campus. That night after the University of Georgia had lost a close basketball game to Georgia Tech, a crowd estimated at 2,000 descended on Myers Hall, Hunter’s residence, and began to riot. Rocks and bottles were hurled at the building, causing some structural damage and a minor injury to a girl living in the dorm. The Athens police tried to secure the area and Dean Tate once again confiscated student IDs to identify the troublemakers. Eight members of the Klu Klux Klan were present at the riot, and later FBI documents suggested they had joined in on the riot after it had been pre-planned by some students. Fire hoses and tear gas had to be used to disperse the mob.⁸⁷

The same night Hunter and Holmes were both taken back to Atlanta by state police, and were subsequently suspended by Dean of Students J.A. Williams for their own protection and the safety of the 7,000 other university students. The pair, though, was supported via petition by two-thirds of the university faculty and by state business leaders who were mindful of the economic consequences of the perceived backwardness of the South vis-à-vis segregation. Hunter and Holmes were reinstated as students by Judge Bootle on Friday, January 13, and were back in class the following Monday.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Grant, p.383.

⁸⁶ <http://www.uga.edu/news/desegregation/2000program/index.html>.

⁸⁷ Pratt (2002), p.96.

⁸⁸ <http://faculty.mdc.edu/jmcnair/EDG2701%20All%20Classes/Racism.htm>.

The University of Mississippi

The case of the desegregation of the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) by James Meredith on October 1, 1962, is the most well known and well documented desegregation of the three universities profiled in this study. It involved the most legal maneuvering both on the parts of the university and the state government to defy federal law – the *Brown v. Board of Education* case that outlawed segregation in public education – as well as to defy subsequent rulings by federal judges ordering Ole Miss to grant admission to James Meredith.

Meredith's desegregation certainly provided the most high drama of the three desegregations thanks to Governor Ross Barnett's vacillation in negotiations with the Kennedy administration as well as the Mississippi government's unintended, yet negligent, meltdown of order that resulted in a battle between U.S. Marshals and assorted obstructionist parties at the Lyceum building on the Ole Miss campus.

Ole Miss also has the dubious distinction of being the only lethal university desegregation, with one bystander being killed by an errant bullet and a foreign journalist being murdered while reporting on the melee. It is also the most academically well documented desegregation of the three profiled, both in terms of the sheer volume of analysis dedicated to the subject, and, germane to this study, analysis of the press in Mississippi at the time. To briefly set the tone for the state of Mississippi's newspaper press during the Jim Crow era, Mississippi native and journalist Karl Fleming wrote of the general state of blatant racism in the state's newspapers at the time, but singled out state capital Jackson's largest newspaper *The Clarion-Ledger* as being "the worst."⁸⁹ Journalist Bill Prochnau of *The Washington Post* called *The Clarion-Ledger*, "perhaps the most racist major newspaper in the country."⁹⁰ *The Columbia*

⁸⁹ Karl Fleming, *Son of the Rough South: An Uncivil Memoir* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005) p.270.

⁹⁰ Bill Prochnau, "The Tale of a Pulitzer, a Paper, a Family," *The Washington Post*, (1983, April 25).

Journalism Review likewise weighed in on the journalistic integrity of *The Clarion-Ledger* and its sister publication, the *Jackson Daily News*, in a 1967 edition, calling them “quite possibly the worst metropolitan newspapers in the United States.”⁹¹ Journalists Hank Klibanoff and Gene Roberts in their book *The Race Beat* state that the Hederman family of Jackson, who owned and published *The Clarion-Ledger*, through their racist, unbalanced coverage set a low standard that “editors at smaller papers found all too easy to meet,”⁹² perhaps accounting in some part for Ole Miss’ particularly contentious desegregation via the agenda set by the paper.

Post-World War II Mississippi

For most participants in World War II, the war became the defining event of their lives. For some black members of the military, it also served to inspire them to secure their rights once back in America. In spite of fighting in a segregated army, black soldiers often found that they were received more warmly by whites in Europe than in the United States. Former army soldier and brother of Mississippi civil rights leader Medgar Evers, Charles Evers said, “When we got home we were determined to be treated fairly.”⁹³ Black Mississippians, though they constituted 60 percent of Mississippians fighting in the war, returned home from foreign battles to a state that still did not accept them as full citizens. Despite being granted suffrage with the passage of the Reconstruction Acts of 1867, intimidation of and acts of violence against black voters by groups such as the Klu Klux Klan as well as regressive Jim Crow laws had seen the number of blacks registered to vote in Mississippi dwindle from a high of 60,000 in 1867 to 20,000 in

⁹¹ David R. Davies, ed., *The Press and Race: Mississippi Journalists Confront the Movement* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), p.85.

⁹² Roberts, p.272.

⁹³ Sam Pollard (Producer) & Richard Wormser (Director), “Episode 4: Terror and triumph (1940-1954)” *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow* (San Francisco, CA: California Newsreel, 2002)

1954.⁹⁴ Black students of all levels in Mississippi were also treated as second-class citizens, relegated to having to gain an education on budgetary scraps. By 1950 black primary school students accounted for 60 percent of the state's public school students, but received less than 30 percent of the budget for public schools. For the year 1959-1960, Mississippi public expenditures per black primary school pupil were \$21.77 versus \$81.86 for white pupils.⁹⁵ Salaries for black teachers were half of what they were for white teachers.⁹⁶ Increasing integration in other areas of public life outside the state also made life in the segregated South harder to continue to endure.

President Harry Truman's 1948 Executive Order 9981 mandating the desegregation of the military along with increasing non-southern Congressional support for civil rights gave black Americans reason for hope. The rising profile of civil rights, though it took a long time to sink into the public consciousness, according to Gallup polls, and also caused some conservative white Southerners to dig in for a fight, contributing to the founding of the States' Rights Democratic Party, better known as the Dixiecrats.⁹⁷ The *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling in 1954 sent further waves through conservative white Mississippi society, resulting in the establishment of White Citizens' Councils in Mississippi and other southern states.⁹⁸ The ruling, as an affront to white dominance in Mississippi, also garnered much attention in the pages of the state's press, though it received half as much editorial space than the Dixiecrat walkout six years earlier. The entrenchment of vitriolic, segregationist whites in the face of trends toward black societal enfranchisement came about because of long-established white preferences for black behavior, specifically the so-called "Happy Negro".⁹⁹ The prospect of blacks fully vested in all

⁹⁴ Weill, p.2.

⁹⁵ James W. Silver, "Mississippi: The Closed Society." *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 30. No. 1., 1964, p.31.

⁹⁶ Weill, p.45.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p.21.

⁹⁸ Nelson.

⁹⁹ Weill, p.35.

the rights of citizenship upset paternalistic white notions of black inferiority, which existed along a spectrum ranging from attempting to raise up the black race through education, to the view that blacks were a permanently retarded race for whom education was futile but who could be employed in unskilled labor.¹⁰⁰ The latter sentiment was succinctly stated by one Mississippi newspaper editor who stated, “[The Negro] is already getting all the education he could handle.”¹⁰¹ It was this latter strain of thought that also established the pretext for exploitative employment practices and reliance of white enterprises such as sharecropping upon cheap black labor.¹⁰²

There was also a sexual element to the subjugation of blacks in the Jim Crow South. The same pseudoscience cast an animalistic light on blacks – jungle rhythm, etc – also caused them to be viewed as fearsome sexual aggressors¹⁰³ for whom social integration would create opportunities for sexual assaults against white women in the worst cases and intermarriage – thus eroding the purity of the white race – in the best cases.

The concept of “miscegenation” – mixing of the races – was probably the most widely relied upon, publicly acknowledged reason for resisting integration among white Mississippians. Contrasted to the desire for continued economic subjugation of blacks and the paranoia of white parents that their daughters would be set upon by black sexual predators, the miscegenation principle was not confined to hushed, private conversations, but instead was commonly cited in public discourse of the faults inherent in societal desegregation. Conservative interpretation of biblical passages lent credence to the anti-miscegenation concept, thus defending mortals against

¹⁰⁰ Guion Johnson, “Southern Paternalism Toward Negroes after Emancipation,” *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 23. No. 4. 1957, p.483.

¹⁰¹ Weill, p.xi.

¹⁰² Annenberg Lerner, *American Passages: Unit 13. Southern Renaissance*, <http://www.learner.org/amerpass/unit13/glossary.html>

¹⁰³ Charles W. Eagles, *The Price of Defiance: James Meredith and the Integration of Ole Miss* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), p.48.

accusations of racism and instead making only God accountable for laying down the rules for social and biological interaction. In the view of opponents to miscegenation, the erosion of social barriers to interracial interaction would inevitably lead to interracial sexual relationships and inferior biracial offspring prone to disease, retardation and immorality.¹⁰⁴ Barnett explained to the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* his views of miscegenation invoking a sports metaphor:

Supposing Ole Miss went somewhere and played a team that uses Negroes. We would have to have a return game with them in Oxford, or Jackson. After the game, there would be a social event. What would the Negroes do? They would attend. What would the Negroes do? Would they dance with white girls? Not in Mississippi. It wouldn't work and that's why we're staying out of it.¹⁰⁵

Desegregation

United States Air Force veteran and Mississippi native James Meredith sued for entry to the University of Mississippi on May 31, 1961, thus setting in motion the end of segregation in public higher education in the state of Mississippi. Meredith's application to the university, from the perspective of most white Mississippians at the time, constituted an assault on a system of segregation that had been carefully cultivated since the end of the Civil War.

The late James Silver, a former professor of American history at the University of Mississippi and outspoken reformist, wrote at length of what he called "the closed society" of Mississippi. He described a caste system into which black Mississippians were born at the bottom, and which whites at the top sought to preserve through whichever theoretical underpinnings happened to be most convenient, including religious fundamentalism and

¹⁰⁴ Nikki Brown & Barry Stentiford, eds., *The Jim Crow Encyclopedia* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008), p.531.

¹⁰⁵ William Doyle, *An American Insurrection: The Battle of Oxford, Mississippi* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), p.74.

conservative interpretations of the Constitution that gave broad prerogative to states.¹⁰⁶ The atmosphere of the University of Mississippi itself and the agendas of its administrators also stood in opposition to Meredith's attempt at matriculation.

The university, after the transformational experience of World War II, still remained a bulwark of the state's conservative, elite agrarian society. By the early 1960s, the university still retained its character as a "finishing school for the children of the gentry," in the words of then-chancellor John D. Williams.¹⁰⁷ Williams, himself a quiet reformer, sought to change the university into a more reputable institution with more graduate students, increased research and with higher-quality faculty members possessing terminal degrees. His ability to do so was kept in check, though, by a Board of Regents that was composed of the sort of landed elites who sought to retain the university's country club atmosphere.¹⁰⁸ The state's power structure was also filled with alumni of the university, for whom the school formed a central aspect of their social lives, and for whom the thought of intermingling equitably with blacks was untenable.¹⁰⁹ Mississippi's newspapers contributed to the enshrinement of the University of Mississippi through regular newspaper coverage of campus events that might not command such attention in other states, such as the selection of the campus homecoming king and queen.¹¹⁰ The specter of a righteous Civil War confederacy also loomed over the campus. The university's sporting teams were called the Rebels, and home football games featured a field-sized Confederate battle flag draped over the field. The campus featured a Confederate cemetery and a marble statue of a Confederate

¹⁰⁶ Silver, p.4.

¹⁰⁷ Eagles, p.21.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p.16.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p.15.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p.23.

soldier. There was also an annual essay contest begun in 1906 where students defended Mississippi's right to secede in 1861.¹¹¹

Any black person seeking to integrate the University of Mississippi would encounter an environment that was, at the very best, deeply ambivalent toward the question of integration. A few professors, such as James Silver and criminology professor Alfred C. Schnur, proposed that the mistreatment of the black population of Mississippi was detrimental to all Mississippians.¹¹² Chancellor J.D. Williams, himself not a Mississippian, exhibited progressive tendencies in trying to bring the University of Mississippi up to modern standards, though he had not specifically addressed the question of integration in his efforts. Williams, though silent on his opinion on integration, recognized the generational grudges that any efforts to integrate in the South would have to overcome: "I came from the part of the country where the percentage [of blacks] is much less, where we were never governed by Negroes in the Legislature, or Negroes as governors, or Negroes as justices in the courts as this part of the country experienced during the Reconstruction period."¹¹³ The campus newspaper, *The Mississippian*, also showed periodic signs progressive editorial thought. Editor-in-chief Tom Bordeaux in 1946 made waves when he suggested in editorials that social and economic suppression of blacks also hurt white Mississippians.¹¹⁴ Editor-in-chief Jimmie Robertson drew the ire of conservatives when he criticized the segregationist Race and Reason Day at the university in a January 1962 editorial.¹¹⁵ Segregationists later attempted to preempt the editorship of Billy Barton in 1961 because he had interned at the *Atlanta Constitution* under the liberal Ralph McGill.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Ibid, p.17.

¹¹² Ibid, p.37.

¹¹³ Ibid, p.27.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p.32.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p.175.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p.181.

Aside from these few examples of progressive individuals, the campus was generally resistant to change in the status quo regarding integration. The university held a bizarrely inconsistent view of race. Non-white foreign students, including Africans, were readily accepted as students, but domestic blacks were not. The only American black faces to be seen on campus were university workers who were often subjugated to disrespectful treatment by their white managers.¹¹⁷ The editors of *The Mississippian*, though occasionally more skeptical of segregation than the student body, did not squelch the opinions of students who submitted letters to the editor to the contrary. One student wrote in early 1962, “[The races] will instinctively cleaves to the people of his own race...[I will] instill in my own son an inherent interest in his own race.” Another student wrote that desegregation “would be to loose upon the Southland a maelstrom of riots and criminal acts, the mind of the Negro being what it is.”¹¹⁸

The University of Mississippi also played host to the sort of anti-communist efforts that conflated communism with the civil rights movement. The civil rights movement was linked to communism in the minds of segregationists because the Communist Party’s 1928 platform specifically mentioned ending racial segregation as one of its goals.¹¹⁹ Perpetuating the disingenuous relationship, the university sponsored a series of anti-communist essays to that end. It also invited assistant director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation William C. Sullivan to speak to student religious groups on the subject of “Communism and Christianity.” The president of the American Bar Association and Yazoo City native John C. Satterfield gave an anti-integration lecture entitled “They Will Bury Themselves – If We Help Them.”¹²⁰

James H. Meredith

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p.42.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p.33.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p.180.

¹²⁰ Ibid, p.178.

James Meredith was born in 1933 in Attala County, Mississippi, to Moses “Cap” and Roxie Meredith. Cap Meredith was an atypical rural black Mississippian during that time in that he was literate and owned his own farm, thus was not locked into a subsistence sharecropping cycle like most blacks. Cap was also a rarity in that he registered to vote in Attala County in 1919, an action that often resulted in intimidation or worse for blacks who dared to do so.¹²¹ The Meredith household was also unusual in that in addition to residing on their own land, their house also had electricity and a radio, thus exposing James Meredith to a wider world from an early age.¹²² In spite of the relatively advantageous circumstances into which Meredith was born, his family was also very insular, especially when it came to interacting with whites. Cap and Roxie Meredith forbade their children to ever set foot on white neighbors’ property to avoid the sort of misunderstandings or accidents that could result in severe retribution being taken against the Merediths. As for many others in the rest of the Deep South, Meredith’s childhood in Kosciusko, Mississippi, was one of segregation – separate churches, schools, businesses and neighborhood for blacks.¹²³

Meredith was known as a bright student in primary school and was raised to value education since his parents were unable to complete theirs.¹²⁴ After finishing high school, Meredith enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in July 1951 because he could not afford college and wanted to avoid service in one of the more violent branches that were fully engaged in the Korean War. Early on in his service, Meredith was one of a few airmen chosen to take the entrance exam for an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, but did not gain entry due to his somewhat deficient high school education in Mississippi. This shortcoming

¹²¹ Ibid, p.206.

¹²² Ibid, p.205.

¹²³ Ibid, p.207.

¹²⁴ Ibid, p.205.

stung Meredith, thus he set out to improve his education through college correspondence courses via the University of Kansas; Armed Forces Institute of Madison, Wisconsin; Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas; and the University of Omaha. Around this time, the young sergeant also began to invest in land in Attala County.¹²⁵ Meredith initially mustered out of the Air Force in 1955, but soon re-enlisted after he became dissatisfied with his brief attendance at Wayne State University in Detroit. After his re-enlistment he married Mary June Wiggins and was then stationed in Japan, where he became known as a taskmaster to his subordinates and also received high ratings from superiors.¹²⁶

Meredith's Air Force service in Japan was an especially formative time for him because of the relative societal freedoms he enjoyed there. "It's the only place in the world where I'm near free," he said.¹²⁷ To the Japanese, Meredith's black ethnicity identified him only as an American G.I. and not as a second-class citizen as it did in the United States. Meredith, who had expressed a childhood dream to attend the University of Mississippi and who remained informed of the nascent civil rights movement stateside, received some unexpected encouragement in his support of the movement from a white colonel from Mississippi. During a promotion review board, the colonel quizzed Meredith about his opinions on the civil rights movement and told him, "We are with you, but the degree of success attained in this new move to unify the potentials of our country will depend on you."¹²⁸ After Meredith's second enlistment in the Air Force was finished in 1960, he moved back to Mississippi to participate in the civil rights movement. His stated goal was "total victory . . . over 'White Supremacy.'" In order to more effectively participate, Meredith decided to enroll at Jackson State College to complete his

¹²⁵ Ibid, p.209.

¹²⁶ Ibid, p.210.

¹²⁷ Ibid, p.211.

¹²⁸ Ibid, p.213.

education. Meredith settled on Jackson State because of its focus on liberal arts education and its location in the capital city of Jackson, which Meredith felt afforded blacks a more dignified existence than in the other more rural locations of black colleges in Mississippi.¹²⁹

Meredith's intellectual attachment to the civil rights movement continued to grow during his attendance at Jackson State. His college papers and essays from this time indicated a willingness to tackle questions of how to improve black society that were answered with his opinion that blacks were being stifled by white authorities and that blacks would have to establish a new system in order to benefit.¹³⁰ Meredith also became involved with student groups at Jackson State and joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in September 1960. Meredith met with NAACP Mississippi field secretary Medgar Evers to discuss applying to the University of Mississippi, though Meredith declined to do so in spite of his childhood desire.¹³¹ Meredith's initial rejection of Evers' proposal did not end his interest in attending the University of Mississippi, though. His interest in doing so grew, and he was encouraged to do so by friends and classmates. His Jackson State coursework continued to strengthen his resolve. Meredith felt that he had the right to attend any public institution and that "there is no logical reason to justify denying a law-abiding citizen the rights of full citizenship solely on the basis of race."¹³² Meredith also felt that the new John F. Kennedy administration taking office was a positive development, as he felt Kennedy was more likely to take political risks for blacks than the defeated Richard Nixon.¹³³ Around this time, Meredith made two important decisions, though one seemed trivial at the time. First, he registered to vote in Hinds

¹²⁹ Ibid, p.214.

¹³⁰ Ibid, p.216.

¹³¹ Ibid, p.218.

¹³² Ibid, p.220.

¹³³ Ibid, p.220.

County, a risky venture for a black man in 1960s Mississippi.¹³⁴ The ramifications of this decision would later affect the legal proceedings of his second, fateful choice: to apply for acceptance to the all-white University of Mississippi.

After requesting an undergraduate course catalog and an application form from the University of Mississippi on January 21, 1961, Meredith received a letter from registrar Robert B. Ellis on January 28, 1961, that said, “We are pleased to know of your interest in becoming a member of our student body.”¹³⁵ Meredith submitted a complete application for acceptance to the University of Mississippi Registrar Robert B. Ellis’s office on January 31, 1961. The mailed application included his health records and an application for student housing, along with academic transcripts forwarded by Jackson State.¹³⁶ In the application package Meredith immediately disclosed that he was not white: “I sincerely hope that your attitude toward me as a potential member of your student body . . . will not change upon learning that I am not a white applicant. I am an American-Mississippi-Negro citizen . . . I certainly hope that this matter will be handled in a manner that will be complimentary to the University and the state of Mississippi.”¹³⁷

Ellis’ first move was to recognize that Meredith’s background and attributes made him unusual for a black person from Mississippi, and that as an unknown quantity he presented a potentially successful applicant to the university. Unlike past black applicants to the university, the last of whom was Clennon King in 1958, Meredith was a native-born Mississippian and a military veteran. He had also been a successful student at other colleges, and Ellis recognized that Meredith’s application could not be handled routinely. It was forwarded to university

¹³⁴ Ibid, p.217.

¹³⁵ Doyle, p.30.

¹³⁶ Eagles, p.221.

¹³⁷ Doyle, p.30.

counsel Hugh Clegg, who had been designated to investigate applications from blacks. Copies were also forwarded to Mississippi state Attorney General Joseph T. Patterson and the executive secretary of the board of the Mississippi Institutes of Higher Learning (IHL).¹³⁸ The university administration had to scramble to decide what to do about Meredith's application because the spring semester began a few days later on February 6, 1961. A special meeting of the university's leadership and the IHL board of trustees' executive secretary was convened in Oxford on February 4 with the official purpose of "discussing the problem of over-crowding"¹³⁹ at the university. The participants cited the increasing student-to-faculty ratio, crowded labs and cramped dorms among the reasons for limiting admissions. The university administration decided to retroactively set the cutoff date for new admissions at January 25, 1961, six days prior to the receipt of Meredith's application on January 31, though it did not apply to university employees, their families, graduate students or anyone with a prior oral commitment from the university.¹⁴⁰ Chancellor Williams, however, chalked the cutback up to inadequate funding from the state. Regardless of the stated reason, it was the first attempt on the part of the university, and later, the state of Mississippi, to use "delay, deception and duplicity" to avoid admitting Meredith.¹⁴¹ Registrar Ellis telegraphed Meredith, as well as thirteen other applicants, why he had been denied admission.

Not content to let the excuse of overcrowding suffice, the IHL board of trustees convened a meeting in Jackson on February 7 where it adopted three policies that would serve to perpetuate segregation of higher education in Mississippi. The first policy allowed a white public university to reject transfer applications, such as Meredith's, from unaccredited colleges, such as

¹³⁸ Eagles, p.222.

¹³⁹ Ibid, p.222.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, p.222.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, p.223.

Jackson State College. This policy effectively prohibited all potential black transfer applicants because no black colleges were accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (SACS) at that time. Second, an applicant could be rejected on the vague premise of having submitted an application that contained “false, contradictory, questionable or uncertain data.” Last, any applicant must have a certificate of admission prior to being able to register for classes in person. All three of these policies applied to Meredith.¹⁴²

Meredith, despite the impression of naivety that he emanated, took precautions from the very beginning of his effort to gain admission to the University of Mississippi. At the suggestion of Medgar Evers, Meredith contacted the NAACP’s Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF). The LDF, directed by *Brown v. Board of Education* chief plaintiff counsel and future U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, was a spin-off of the NAACP concerned with litigating on behalf of plaintiffs in civil rights cases.¹⁴³ Even though Meredith sought out the assistance of the LDF, he was initially unsure of the ability of the NAACP to effect any change. Meredith was also put off by Marshall’s insistence upon gaining complete documentary evidence of Meredith’s academic and military records.¹⁴⁴ Meredith also reached out to the U.S. Department of Justice via the Jackson-based U.S. Attorney William L. Higgs. Higgs, a white Mississippian, was also a liberal activist and Harvard Law alumnus who readily put Meredith in touch with Burke Marshall, the assistant attorney general of the United States. Meredith explained the embarrassment he had suffered in being rejected by the University of Mississippi and said in his letter to Marshall, “I simply ask that the federal agencies use the power and prestige of their positions to insure the full rights of citizenship for our people.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Ibid, p.224.

¹⁴³ Ibid, p.224.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p.225.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p.226.

It was around this time that the press first caught wind of Meredith's application to the university. On February 8, 1961, the *Jackson Daily News* reported that an unnamed black Jackson State College student had applied and that the university had responded by moving the application cutoff date to January 25 in order to deny him. Over the next month, Meredith conducted two anonymous interviews with UPI reporters telling them that he wanted to attend the University of Mississippi because it was "no doubt the best institution in the state"¹⁴⁶ and that he felt compelled to apply to the university because he wanted to be able to one day tell his infant son that he had done his part to fight segregation.¹⁴⁷ Though Meredith was still unnamed at this time, his identity had leaked to people outside the media. His parents were visited at their home in Attala County by influential members of the black community, sent there at the behest of powerful whites, to have the Merediths dissuade their son from continuing his effort. James Meredith and his neighbors in Jackson were also aware of unfamiliar cars filled with whites cruising by his apartment complex. Given these pressures, Meredith adopted what he termed "a strategy to survive."¹⁴⁸

It was in mid-February 1961 that Meredith's case was picked up by the LDF and Constance Baker Motley was assigned to him as his counsel. Motley was chosen by Marshall because he reasoned that a black woman was less likely than a black man to suffer attacks in the South.¹⁴⁹ Motley, communicating with Meredith from New York City, suggested that he focus on applying for the following 1961 fall semester and to have the university registrar classify his as a "continuing application." Motley also instructed Meredith not to communicate unnecessarily with the university and to keep copies of all his correspondence with the school. Meredith

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, p.226.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, p.227.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p.227.

¹⁴⁹ Doyle, p.32.

followed Motley's suggestion to request the university hold his room deposit and to classify him as a continuing applicant, but was met with silence by university officials.¹⁵⁰ Because of this, Meredith became further assured that the university would employ tactics of delay in order to defeat his application. This bolstered his view of himself as a soldier in his efforts with the status quo embodied by the University of Mississippi and the state as the enemy: "I considered myself an active duty soldier . . . Everything I did I considered an act of war."¹⁵¹ Motley understood the university's tactics and instructed Meredith to make his application conform as exactly as possible to the parameters set out by the school's admission policies, including resubmitting five letters of recommendation that attested to Meredith's qualifications for admission in addition to his good moral character.¹⁵² The university's policies required the letters come from alumni, but because all university alumni in 1961 were white and Meredith knew none, he was unable to procure them and substituted them with letters from blacks who knew him.¹⁵³ Motley advised him that the issue of recommendation letters was not vital because the LDF had won a similar suit in Georgia.¹⁵⁴ Even as Meredith and his counsel began to prepare for a legal battle for admission to the University of Mississippi, Meredith continued his studies at Jackson State. Jackson State's administration and his classmates supported Meredith's plan, but to garner more support and to clarify his intentions, Meredith publicly identified himself as the anonymous black applicant to the University of Mississippi. He also circulated an essay in late March 1961 that rationalized his attempt by highlighting that the United States' socialist rivals used American segregation in propaganda.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁰ Eagles, p.228.

¹⁵¹ Doyle, p.34.

¹⁵² Eagles, p.229.

¹⁵³ Ibid, p.201.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p.232.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p.231.

Meredith endured a four-month silence on the part of the university that ended on May 9, 1961, when he received a letter from Ellis. In the letter Ellis acknowledged that his application and transcripts had been received, but that the university could accept only 48 of Meredith's 90 semester hours. The letter, however, did not say that Meredith had been approved, and asked if he would like the application to be handled as a "pending application." Motley believed that the letter from Ellis implicitly stated that Meredith was qualified for admission,¹⁵⁶ but on May 25 Ellis sent a letter to Meredith stating:

I regret to inform you in answer to your recent letter, that your application for admission must be denied. The university cannot recognize the transfer of credits from the institution which you are now attending since it is not a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Our policy permits the transfer of credits only from member institutions of regional associations. Furthermore, students may not be accepted by the University from those institutions whose programs are not recognized.¹⁵⁷

Given Ellis' response and the increasingly obvious refusal of the university to consider Meredith's application in any good faith, Motley filed suit in federal court in Meridian on May 31, 1961, thus beginning over a year of litigation between Meredith and the University of Mississippi. The case, *Meredith v. Fair* (head IHL trustee Charles D. Fair), was presided over by Judge Sidney Mize. It was on the following day, June 1, 1961, that Meredith's picture first appeared in a newspaper – a very rare phenomenon for a black person at the time – on the front page of the *Meridian Star*. The *Star* ran an editorial that day titled "Never Say Die" that presented as evidence against desegregation the sort of quasi-biblical pseudoscience that frequently bubbled up in writing at the time: "Massive integration will mean future intermarriage

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p.234.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, p.236.

... the emergence of a tribe of mongrels.” The Jackson *Clarion-Ledger* on the same day ran a story about the lawsuit on its front page. The paper did not advance an official editorial stance at the time, but columnist Charles M. Hill sought to falsely discredit Meredith by stating that he did not know how to spell “Biloxi.”¹⁵⁸

Meredith’s claim was based on the Fourteenth Amendment, specifically the Equal Protection Clause that saw *Brown v. Board of Education* decided in favor of ending school desegregation.¹⁵⁹ Motley sought to have the court declare that blacks had the right to attend state institutions based upon the same entry criteria that saw whites admitted. The suit centered on the four-month wait Meredith endured before receiving his denial of admission and that the university had not given a reason for its decision, thus not extending to Meredith the same treatment that would have been expected for a white applicant.¹⁶⁰ Judge Mize, unconvinced of wrongdoing on the part of the University of Mississippi, denied Motley’s request for a restraining order, which would have allowed Meredith to enroll at the university. Mize, though, scheduled a hearing two weeks later in order to hear arguments about the larger implications of Meredith’s suit against the university.¹⁶¹

When the hearing reconvened in mid-June 1961, the state of Mississippi focused on trying to discredit Meredith’s moral foundations. The state assistant attorney general and lead defense counsel Dugas Shands was given a wide latitude by Mize to pepper Meredith with irrelevant questions and to imply that Meredith was a pawn of the NAACP in his attempt.¹⁶² Shands’ first attempt to deconstruct Meredith’s qualifications for admission was to attempt to

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, p.237.

¹⁵⁹ Constance Baker Motley, “James Meredith in Perspective,” *The Crisis*. Vol. 70, No. 1., 1963, p.5. Retrieved from Google Books.

¹⁶⁰ Eagles, p.240.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p.241.

¹⁶² Ibid, p.242.

show that Meredith had fraudulently registered to vote in Hinds County upon his relocation to Mississippi. Shands' argued that Meredith had not resided in Hinds Country for a year prior to registration, as was required. Meredith, however, showed that he had always listed Mississippi as his home state during his military service and that the Hinds County voting registrar gave him the same residence waiver that all military personnel received.¹⁶³

Judge Mize then halted the hearing and scheduled it for resumption a month later on July 10, 1961. Before the hearing could resume, the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission, a state agency that worked to maintain segregation and to foil "federal encroachment,"¹⁶⁴ tried to intimidate Meredith by releasing information about himself and his family.¹⁶⁵ During the intermission of the hearing, Meredith's legal team tried five times to depose registrar Ellis in order to find out what other applicants had been admitted without the same paperwork that was being required of Meredith. The state resisted allowing Ellis to be deposed because he had already once been called as a witness during the hearing. The state also made an issue of lead defense counsel Shands' health in delaying forward movement.¹⁶⁶ Ellis was able to continue to avoid deposition and continued to deny that Meredith was rejected because of his race, but instead was rejected because his legal residence in Mississippi was in question. Ellis and the state of Mississippi continued to argue that Meredith simply wanted to cause trouble at the behest of the NAACP.¹⁶⁷ When the hearing resumed in Jackson on August 10, 1961, after an eight-week delay, Shands tried to demonstrate Meredith's psychological instability by pointing out that Meredith had complained of "nervous trouble" while on duty in the Air Force, but had omitted

¹⁶³ Ibid, p.245.

¹⁶⁴ Yasuhiro Katagiri, *The Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission: Civil Rights and States' Rights* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), p.6.

¹⁶⁵ Eagles, p.246.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, p.247.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p.248.

mention of the ailment on his application to the university. Ellis was called as a witness on August 11, and explained that Meredith's application was incomplete. After another four-day delay, Shands tried to throw further derail the hearing by constantly objecting to Motley. Motley did succeed in getting Ellis to admit that he would admit a black applicant if he met the entrance requirements.¹⁶⁸ Motley pointed out that the university had decided not to accept Meredith's Jackson State credits on February 7, 1961, prior to the date when it formally adopted the policy of not accepting class credit from non-SACS-accredited schools on May 15, 1961. She also argued that Jackson State was accredited by other accrediting institutions, including the Mississippi College Accrediting Commission.¹⁶⁹ When the university's argument over academic achievement had been dismantled by Motley, attorney Charles Clark, who had taken over for an ill Shands, resorted again to the argument that Meredith was not qualified because he did not tell the truth under oath, thus demonstrating a deficiency in moral character.¹⁷⁰

Judge Mize ruled against granting Meredith's request for an injunction against Ole Miss on December 12, 1961. Mize rejected the defense's argument that Meredith was not a resident of Mississippi, but accepted their arguments on other counts: that Meredith's race was immaterial and that he had been rejected on the grounds that his application was incomplete and that his moral fiber was in question. A member of Meredith's LDF counsel immediately filed an appeal with the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Chief Judge Elbert P. Tuttle granted the appeal and a hearing was scheduled for January 9, 1962, in New Orleans. When the hearing convened, Motley repeated to Tuttle and Judges Richard T. Rives and John Minor Wisdom her argument that Meredith's application had been rejected because he was black.¹⁷¹ The Fifth Circuit did not

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, p.251.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p.254.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, p.255.

¹⁷¹ Ibid, p.255.

grant the requested injunction that would allow Meredith to register. But the court did recognize that the state of Mississippi and the University of Mississippi favored whites over blacks, but that Meredith counsel had not yet proved that he was rejected solely for being black. The Fifth Circuit chastised Judge Mize for his earlier conduct of the hearing in the lower court and ordered him to proceed with a full hearing.¹⁷² The full hearing presided over by Mize began again in Jackson on January 16, 1962, with both plaintiff and defense repeating their arguments about racism and moral shortcomings, respectfully. On February 4, 1962, Mize once again ruled that the university had not discriminated against Meredith on the basis of race.¹⁷³

The next day on February 5, 1962, Motley filed a request with the Fifth Circuit again to seek an injunction against the university's rejection of Meredith so that he might be able to register in time for the beginning of the spring semester the next day on February 6, 1962.¹⁷⁴ The three judges – Rives, Tuttle and Wisdom – agreed to hear the case. Motley again argued that race had decided Meredith's application, while Mississippi assistant attorney general Joseph Patterson called on the court to uphold the decision of another federal judge.¹⁷⁵ In a two-to-one decision, the Fifth Circuit rejected the request because Rives and Wisdom did not want to issue an injunction only to overturn it later after a full hearing. Tuttle was the dissenting vote, reasoning that the court would eventually issue an injunction and did not want to waste time. The court, despite its reticence to issue an injunction, suggested to Meredith that he not make the case moot by graduating from Jackson State and instead might strategically procrastinate by taking electives until a full appeal hearing could take place.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² Ibid, p.256.

¹⁷³ Ibid, p.260.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, p.261.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p.261.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, p.262.

The full appeal hearing of the Fifth Circuit convened on April 20, 1962. Judges Wisdom, John R. Brow and Dozier A. DeVane presided. Motley stuck to her argument, while the university lawyer, Edward Cates, focused on Meredith's "fraudulent" voter registration in Hinds County in 1960. Apparently unwilling to take a chance on Meredith receiving his desired injunction, Mississippi authorities tried to head him off. On June 6, 1962, prior to the decision in the current appeal hearing, Hinds County county attorney Paul G. Anderson sought a bench warrant from a justice of the peace in that county to have Meredith arrested for fraudulently registering to vote. A Hinds sheriff's deputy arrested Meredith at his home in Jackson and held him in jail until Medgar Evers and Jack Young, a black Jackson lawyer, posted \$500 bail later in the evening.¹⁷⁷ Judge Wisdom, on application from Motley, ordered the state not to charge Meredith with a crime, calling it a "punitive action."¹⁷⁸

The case of *Meredith v. Fair* was seemingly decided once and for all on June 25, 1962, when Judges Wisdom and Brown decided in favor of the plaintiff. The decision said:

. . . From the moment the defendants discovered Meredith was a Negro they engaged in a carefully calculated campaign of delay, harassment, and masterly inactivity. It was a defense designed to discourage and to defeat by tactics which would have been a credit to Quintus Fabius Maximus . . . [The continuances] were part of the defendants' delaying actions . . . It almost worked.¹⁷⁹

The Fifth Circuit's ruling did not overturn Judge Mize's decision, however, but reversed it and strongly rebuked Mize in its majority opinion of the decision. The court found that University of Mississippi's policy of requiring applicants to submit alumni recommendation letters was designed to circumvent the rulings of the *Brown v. Board of Education* case. The

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, p.264.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p.265.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, p.265.

university's policy was enacted just six months following the *Brown* ruling. Judge Wisdom, in writing for the majority, noted that the state of Mississippi's IHL effectively prohibited all black college transfer applicants from applying to white universities because Mississippi's black colleges were purposefully hindered with the intent of being unable to gain accreditation from accreditation granting organizations.¹⁸⁰ Wisdom also wrote that the court found Meredith had been turned down "solely because he was a Negro. We see no valid, non-discriminatory reason for the University's not accepting Meredith."¹⁸¹

The defense had up to twenty-one days to file an appeal to the ruling, but did not act by the time the Fifth Circuit sent its mandate to Mize. Realizing their odds of successfully appealing the ruling were slim, the defense instead lodged a request with another member of the Fifth Circuit, Judge Benjamin Franklin Cameron, to issue a stay in the order.¹⁸² Judge Cameron was known as a conservative who believed in states' rights more than a strong federal government. The goal of the state of Mississippi lawyers was to get Cameron to issue a stay that would prevent Mize from acting on the Fifth Circuit's orders. They hoped that during the thirty-day stay U.S. Supreme Court would agree to hear their appeal before its summer recess. This turn nearly caused Meredith to abandon his case. He was torn between staying the course and finishing his degree at Jackson State in order to move on to graduate school, but Motley was able to convince him to keep up the effort. The three judges of the Fifth Circuit reacted by recalling their directive to Mize, resumed authority in the case and set aside Cameron's stay on July 27, 1962. Between July 28 and August 6, 1962, Cameron and the other three Fifth Circuit judges alternated stays and vacations. Cameron rationalized his stays by saying that the Fifth Circuit was overstepping

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, p.266.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p.267.

¹⁸² Ibid, p.268.

its bounds.¹⁸³ After Cameron's final stay on August 6, Meredith's LDF team decided to break the cycle of judicial badminton in the Fifth Circuit and filed a motion with the U.S. Supreme Court to have Cameron's stay vacated. With the Supreme Court on summer recess and the last day to register for classes on October 1, 1962, approaching, the LDF directly appealed to Justice Hugo Black. Black held jurisdiction over appeals from the Fifth Circuit when the Supreme Court was not in session. They asked Black to use his authority to solve the "spurious question" that the state of Mississippi used to reject Meredith. The defense asked for a writ of certiorari, which would delay any legal action until the Supreme Court returned from vacation after October 1, 1962.¹⁸⁴ Because of the complexity and conflicting legal actions involved in the case, Black informally asked the Department of Justice to comment, thus involving the Kennedy administration in the case for the first time.¹⁸⁵

The Department of Justice (DoJ) began paying closer attention to Meredith's case after Justice Black's request. The Civil Rights Division of the DoJ prepared an *amicus curiae* brief – a voluntary legal opinion from someone not party to a case – that suggested how Fifth Circuit's order could be enacted. The DoJ's interest in the case can be explained by the stake it has in seeing federal judgments being enforced. In its *amicus* brief, the DoJ called Judge Cameron's actions "altogether lawless" and opined that Cameron's stay "would irreparably injure Meredith...because the additional time he would lose would be irretrievable."¹⁸⁶

Justice Black issued his judgment on September 10, 1962, in which he agreed with the Fifth Circuit's prior decision to issue an injunction against the University of Mississippi. Black did not vacate the defense's request for a writ of certiorari on his own, but consulted with each of

¹⁸³ Ibid, p.273.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p.274.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p.273.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, p.275.

the other eight justices and was assured that he had the authority to vacate Judge Cameron's stays. Black decided to act on his authority because he thought it unlikely that entire court would agree to hear *Meredith v. Fair*. Black said that Meredith only stood to be harmed by further delays and that the university could not demonstrate that any harm would come to it by admitting Meredith. His decision effectively ordered Meredith's admission to the University of Mississippi via the Fifth Circuit's order to Judge Mize to order an injunction against the university preventing Meredith's enrollment. Meredith stated that he expected to register the following week.¹⁸⁷

The book was closed on the University of Mississippi's legal arguments with Justice Black's decision. With the U.S. Supreme Court unlikely to agree to hear the case, the Fifth Circuit's decision was the court ruling of precedence. While the university relented at this stage, it marked the beginning of resistance on the part Mississippi's governor, Ross Barnett. Barnett commented on the ruling by saying that it was "just as illegal as if the Supreme Court of Kansas had employed it," thus foreshadowing his attempt to employ "interposition" to resist the federal court order.¹⁸⁸ The concept of interposition was a failed states' rights theory with its roots in the Tenth Amendment that held a state had the right to ignore a federal law or court order if it ran afoul of what the state believed. By 1962, interposition had been repeatedly tested and failed, most notably in the Civil War a century earlier.¹⁸⁹ Following the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, multiple Southern state legislatures passed resolutions of interposition to permit their governors to resist forced federal attempts at desegregation within their states.¹⁹⁰ Alabama flirted with passing a resolution of imposition after *Brown*, but Governor Jim Folsom recognized the

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, p.267.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, p.276.

¹⁸⁹ Doyle, p.64.

¹⁹⁰ David R. Colburn & Richard K. Scher, *Aftermath of the Brown Decision: The Politics of Interposition in Florida*, http://digitalcollections.fiu.edu/tequesta/files/1977/77_1_05.pdf.

futility of such a gesture, saying, “It’s like a dog baying at the moon and claiming it’s got it treed.”¹⁹¹ Mississippi’s state legislature passed such a resolution in 1956.¹⁹²

Barnett and his discredited delaying strategy of imposition would eventually be forced into compliance by the John F. Kennedy administration. Though the Kennedy administration ultimately proved to follow a somewhat plodding course in supporting the Fifth Circuit’s ruling, the president had a reputation as being a supporter of civil rights and was as progressive a chief executive who had ever been in office. Kennedy tried to walk a fine line in building support of both blacks and conservative Southern whites. He gained support of voting blacks by reaching out to the NAACP and helping to get Martin Luther King, Jr. released from a Georgia jail. But Kennedy also threw a bone to conservative Southern democrats when he chose Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas as his running mate in 1960. Governor Barnett, though, burned a bridge between himself and the future president when he expressed support for unpledged electors in the 1960 election in order to build for himself more support among displeased Southern conservatives who looked ready to revolt from the Democratic Party.¹⁹³ Despite Barnett’s earlier affront to Kennedy, the Kennedy administration, and U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy in particular, followed a very gradual course in ensuring the Fifth Circuit was obeyed. The Kennedys preferred persuasion to overt federal action, and simultaneously sought to prevent further fracturing of the Democratic Party by allowing Governor Barnett to appear to have an authoritative, collaborative hand in the inevitable desegregation of the University of Mississippi.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ Davies (2001), p.34.

¹⁹² http://digitalcollections.fiu.edu/tequesta/files/1977/77_1_05.pdf.

¹⁹³ Eagles, p.279.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, p.279.

The Kennedy administration, though it had a reputation of racial progressiveness and ultimately gained credit for its role in bringing to bear the violent potential of the army in seeing Meredith enrolled at the University of Mississippi, was a reluctant participant in the proceedings. The DoJ initially did not respond to the letter Meredith sent to assistant attorney general Burke Marshall's office in February 1961. Marshall, for his part, recognized as early as June 1961 that the federal government was bound to have to become involved if Meredith were granted an injunction by a federal court. In a sign of early planning, Marshall had two deputy marshals make a reconnaissance visit to Oxford, Mississippi, to learn the lay of the land and how to prepare for a possible escort of Meredith. The FBI and army intelligence also got involved in the planning by having local Oxford agents plan where to build a tent city for housing a force of deputy marshals. The Air Force also contributed by flying recon missions over Oxford.¹⁹⁵ Marshall acted as attorney general Robert F. Kennedy's point man on the *Meredith v. Fair* case as it gained steam, keeping the attorney general apprised of the situation. The DoJ remained officially uninvolved until Justice Black made his September 1962 request for an amicus brief from the DoJ. Even before Black's September 10, 1962, decision the upheld the Fifth Circuit's instructions to Judge Mize to grant an injunction, Marshall was working to lay the groundwork for the involvement of federal entities in the bodily protection of Meredith when he set foot on the university campus. Marshall instructed chief U.S. marshal James P. McShane to prepare for Meredith's integration. Marshall also began coordinating with the army for providing logistical support to the marshals.¹⁹⁶

Mississippi and its institutions had leapt into action to thwart the federal orders the day following Black's decision. Governor Barnett, who had run and won in 1959 on a platform of

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, p.287.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p.281.

segregation, was the lead antagonist. After Barnett planned the state's next move with his advisers and White Citizens' Council leaders, he addressed Mississippi in a state-wide radio and television broadcast. On September 13, 1962, the same day Mize granted an injunction against the IHL board, Barnett said in his address:

This is the day and this is the hour...No school in our state will be integrated while I am your Governor. There is no case in history where the Caucasian race has survived social integration. We will not drink from the cup of genocide. Mississippi, as a Sovereign State, has the right under the Federal Constitution to determine for itself what the Federal Government has reserved to it. Therefore, in obedience to legislative and constitutional sanction I do hereby interpose the rights of the Sovereign State of Mississippi to enforce its laws and to regulate its own internal affairs without interference on the part of the Federal government or its officers.¹⁹⁷

Following Barnett's proclamation of interposition, the organizations that would have to bear the brunt of the governor's gambit went to work to try to plan for the near future and ameliorate the damage that was being set in motion by his protestation. University of Mississippi chancellor J.D. Williams and his staff immediately instructed students to treat Meredith normally. The chancellor, the provost and student leaders also held a two-day retreat to plan for the desegregation. The student leaders were charged with keeping their peers in line, and the administration decided that any unruly students would be expelled.¹⁹⁸ The IHL board of trustees – the defendants in *Meredith v. Fair* – met on the day following Barnett's broadcast to see on which side of the decision the various trustees stood. Five of trustees agreed with interposition and the risk of being cited for contempt of court. Six others preferred to admit Meredith. Two

¹⁹⁷ Doyle, p.65.

¹⁹⁸ Eagles, p.284

were undecided.¹⁹⁹ Barnett also considered appointing himself registrar in order to let the IHL off the hook and force a showdown between the office of the governor and the federal government.²⁰⁰ Around the same time, on September 15, 1962, Barnett and attorney general Kennedy began a series of secret phone negotiations whereby the governor agreed to a course of action, but then reneged when the federal government kept up its end of the bargain. In the initial agreement, Barnett agreed that Meredith would appear on campus to register on September 20 along with a handful of deputy U.S. marshals, but would be turned away and allowed to register once a federal court order was arranged. On the public front, Barnett threatened to close the university, which was apparently within his power. This threat was a gambit on the governor's part to get the IHL Board of Trustees to take the probable contempt bullet for him. The IHL had no interest in seeing the University of Mississippi close, and Barnett hoped his threat would force them to make a declaration on their intentions vis-à-vis admitting Meredith. Barnett would get to look like a hero to segregationist Mississippians – he was mulling a run at a U.S. Senate seat – and make the IHL look like the villains who gave in to federal pressure.²⁰¹ When Barnett and Robert Kennedy spoke again on September 17, Barnett changed the plan and proposed that Meredith register at the IHL in Jackson. When Kennedy insisted it be in Oxford, Barnett then asked for further delays because the IHL board had not yet decided on a course of action.²⁰²

Aside from Barnett's efforts at delay, entities around the state of Mississippi colluded in an attempt to throw new roadblocks in Meredith's way. On September 19, 1962, the Hinds County prosecutor renewed the voter fraud charge against Meredith in spite of the Fifth Circuit's

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, p.285.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, p.286.

²⁰¹ Ibid, p.289.

²⁰² Ibid, p.290.

injunction not to.²⁰³ The state legislature immediately stepped in by passing a bill to prevent the enrollment of anyone convicted of or facing crimes involving “moral turpitude.”²⁰⁴ With Barnett vacillating and the legislature laying the groundwork for trouble with the federal government, the IHL board of trustees decided to pass the buck firmly to Barnett by making him responsible for registering Meredith. The pace of desegregation was beginning to quicken in Oxford and on campus, as well. Sporadic Meredith effigy burnings took place on the university campus in late September 1962. More than fifty reporters came to Oxford to await Meredith’s registration.²⁰⁵ The ability of the state of Mississippi to provide law enforcement was also coming into question. The city of Oxford and the university campus had only sixteen police officers between them. State agencies and other counties sent 300 more law enforcement personnel, but the federal government could not trust that these men would serve to keep the peace since they could be mobilized to follow Barnett’s potentially conflicting orders. For this reason, Meredith never stayed in Oxford as he awaited the opportunity to register; he always traveled to Oxford via plane or motorcade with federal agent protection from safer locations in Memphis, Jackson or New Orleans.²⁰⁶

On September 20, 1962, Meredith was found guilty in absentia in the renewed voter fraud case in Hinds County. Motley immediately filed three motions in federal court that sought an injunction against Meredith being arrested, against the Hinds County judge’s injunction against Meredith enrolling, and a restraining order against the new moral turpitude law being used to

²⁰³ Ibid, p.292.

²⁰⁴ Ibid, p.293.

²⁰⁵ Ibid, p.294.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, p.295.

disqualify Meredith. Federal judges and the Fifth Circuit honored Motley's motions and removed the legal barriers to enrolling Meredith.²⁰⁷

With the legal stage set, that same day, Barnett and Meredith both went to Oxford. Barnett flew to Oxford first, along with the lieutenant governor, Paul B. Johnson and Dugas Shands. Barnett arrived with a mandate from the IHL board to either approve or deny Meredith for registration. Barnett met a throng of students surrounding the Lyceum – the main campus administration building at the University of Mississippi – and soaked up their adoration. Meredith arrived in a motorcade with Chief Marshal James P. McShane and a DoJ lawyer, St. John Barrett. Meredith and his small federal entourage were met with racist jeers from the gathered crowd. Chancellor J.D. Williams was not present because he had effectively been stripped of power in the situation when the IHL board gave the mandate to Barnett. Registrar Robert Ellis was present, however, as stage dressing for the stand Barnett was going to make. When Ellis notified Meredith that he no longer had the authority to register Meredith, Barnett read a statement that said, “You, James H. Meredith, are hereby refused admission as a student to the University of Mississippi.” Barnett claimed that he was denying Meredith because admitting him would upset the peace. Meredith and his entourage left. The DoJ petitioned Judge Mize in Meridian to charge university officials with contempt of court, but not against Barnett. The Kennedy administration still did not want to go head-to-head with an unruly governor in court. Mize ultimately decided not to charge the chancellor, dean and registrar with contempt, but the DoJ also asked the Fifth Circuit to increase the pressure on the IHL board by charging all fifteen board members with contempt. After Mize refused the contempt charges of the three university officials, the DoJ added them to the appellate court contempt petition.²⁰⁸ The Fifth Circuit

²⁰⁷ Ibid, p.300.

²⁰⁸ Ibid, p.307.

hearing on the contempt charges convened on September 24, 1962, in New Orleans, just a few hours before registration for the Fall 1962 semester was scheduled to close. The defense attorney for the three named university administrators maintained that Barnett had taken their powers of enrollment. The court ruled the IHL trustees were in contempt. The members immediately capitulated and said they would follow any order the court issued. The court extended the registration deadline for 24 hours, giving Meredith enough time to be registered by Ellis in the board of trustees office in Jackson the next day, according to the plan struck that day.²⁰⁹ When Robert Kennedy and Barnett spoke on the phone that evening, Barnett was taken aback by the decision made without him and replied that he did not yet know what he was going to do, stating that the Mississippi court injunctions were still valid.²¹⁰

The next day, September 25, 1962, the Fifth Circuit issued an injunction that prohibited anyone – Barnett included – from obstructing Meredith’s registration at the University of Mississippi. In a phone conversation that morning, Barnett reiterated that he did not yet know what he was going to do. The governor even vacillated on whether or not Mississippi was part of the Union, demonstrating his adherence to his interposition gambit. In Jackson at noon that day, the IHL board agreed to take back from the governor responsibility for approving Meredith. In the same move, they restored power to Chancellor Williams and Registrar Ellis. When Burke Marshall learned that Barnett had gone to the IHL board office to exert more pressure, he arranged for Fifth Circuit Judge Tuttle to extend the deadline again in order to undermine Barnett’s stalling. When Robert Kennedy called Barnett to verify that Meredith would be able to safely enter the IHL building in spite of the growing crowd, Barnett affirmed that it would be safe. When Meredith, McShane and John Doar, the assistant attorney general for civil rights at

²⁰⁹ Ibid, p.312.

²¹⁰ Ibid, p.313.

the DoJ, arrived from New Orleans that afternoon and went to the IHL building to register, Barnett met them at the entrance and refused to allow them in. Barnett claimed that both the public peace and instructions from the state attorney general mandated his interposition. Doar reiterated his orders to see Meredith registered then and there, but Barnett stood his ground. As the Meredith entourage left to jeers, Barnett once again entered the crowd to imbibe their adoration.²¹¹

After Barnett's willful defiance of federal court orders that afternoon, attorney general Robert Kennedy called to plan the next attempt. Barnett agreed that Meredith would show up to classes on the university campus the next morning at 10 a.m. Chancellor Williams tried to prepare the student population by giving a campus-wide radio broadcast telling them panic was not beneficial. Meredith flew into Oxford on the morning of September 26 and rode with Doar, McShane and six other deputy marshals to the university. The Kennedy administration still did not want to overwhelm any opposition with force, thus dispatched only a few marshals with Meredith to this point. Meredith, though, was blocked from entering campus by a force of Mississippi Highway Patrol officers who created a human barrier across University Avenue, the road leading to the entrance to the campus. Lt. Governor Johnson was ahead of the phalanx and cut off Doar, explaining that Barnett ordered Johnson to refuse Meredith entry onto campus. After the Meredith entourage departed, the Fifth Circuit ordered Johnson to appear before them in New Orleans on September 29 to explain why he should not be held in contempt, again letting Barnett off the hook. Besides federal forces putting pressure on the University of Mississippi – the DoJ was examining recommending cutting federal funding to the university – other organizations were also reassessing their opinions of Mississippi and the university. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was considering whether or not to accredit the

²¹¹ Ibid, p.314-318.

university given the unfolding trouble.²¹² There were also worries among the state business community that Barnett's stand would scare away corporations interested in locating branches in Mississippi.²¹³

Following Barnett's failure to keep up his end of the bargain, he and Robert Kennedy again negotiated by phone. Barnett's new plan involved a surreal theatrical production in which Barnett would capitulate and register only after the U.S. marshals drew their weapons, but Burke Marshall rejected the plan because of the powder keg it was likely to ignite. The next attempt agreed to by Robert Kennedy and involved a force of two dozen marshals accompanying Meredith and Doar. One marshal was designated to draw his pistol in front of Johnson, forcing him to yield. By this point more than one hundred journalists had traveled to Oxford, along with three hundred state troopers and one hundred sheriff's deputies from around the state were on the University of Mississippi, all unarmed. Barnett showed up on the afternoon of September 27 as Meredith's entourage was on its way from Memphis and riled up the crowd of two thousand people. Angling for another delay, Barnett called Robert Kennedy and asked him to have Meredith's motorcade turn around because of the threat posed by the large crowd in which Barnett was just basking.²¹⁴

On September 28, 1962, the Fifth Circuit in New Orleans held a hearing that found Barnett in contempt of court, per the DoJ's motion. Judge Tuttle said the court had "about exhausted its powers...the time has about come...when the burden now falls on the Executive Branch." The court levied a \$10,000-per-day fine against Barnett, but gave him until October 2 to comply with the order.²¹⁵ Lieutenant Governor Johnson was found in contempt the following

²¹² Ibid, p.319-325.

²¹³ Ibid, p.337.

²¹⁴ Ibid, p.327.

²¹⁵ Ibid, p.329.

day and had a \$5,000-per-day fine levied against him, with the same deadline of October 2 for compliance.²¹⁶ It was at this point that President Kennedy became more involved by actively conferring with the DoJ about the situation. Plans for the deployment of federalized National Guard troops began to coalesce when President Kennedy had Robert Kennedy confer with the leaders of the military to decide if army backing would definitely be required in Oxford. It was decided that an army engineering battalion would be sent to Naval Air Station Memphis to await the order to erect a tent city for housing occupying army guardsmen in Oxford, if it still proved necessary.²¹⁷ The odds of military intervention grew in the several days preceding October 1, 1962. The FBI was receiving reports that indicated racist citizen groups were mounting campaigns to send protesters – or possibly thugs – to the university campus. Edwin A. Walker, the army general who implemented an order from President Dwight Eisenhower to maintain order during the 1957 integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, was a vocal opponent of the integration of the University of Mississippi. Based in Texas, he rallied support for on-campus demonstrations against the perceived federal intrusion when he came to Jackson on September 29.²¹⁸ Walker, who had been pushed out of the military for being *too* zealous in his anti-communist stance, made a public statement that contained sentiment common among extreme segregationists:

I am in Mississippi beside Governor Ross Barnett. I call for a national protest against the conspiracy from within. Rally to the cause of freedom in righteous indignation, violent vocal protest, and bitter silence under the flag of Mississippi at the use of Federal troops. This today is a disgrace to the nation in 'dire peril,' a disgrace beyond the capacity of anyone except its enemies. This is the conspiracy of the crucifixion by anti-Christ

²¹⁶ Ibid, p.334.

²¹⁷ Ibid, p.330.

²¹⁸ Doyle, p.96.

conspirators of the Supreme Court in their denial of prayer and their betrayal of a nation.²¹⁹

President Kennedy directly entered negotiations for the first time on September 29. The president underscored that his main interest – in addition to seeing federal law obeyed – was to see that no one was hurt. Barnett pressed for a “cooling off” period before Meredith would try again, but the Kennedys rejected his suggestions for additional delays. Failing that, Barnett then turned to the law passed on September 19 banning applicants suspected of moral turpitude, and the conversation ended on uncertain terms. Barnett reached the height of his hubris later that evening at a University of Mississippi-University of Kentucky football game in Jackson. At half-time he gave a speech in which he vowed to resist federal encroachment. Most of the crowd of 42,000 rose to their feet and gave Barnett an ovation, inflating his sense of righteousness that was just two days away from being severely deflated.²²⁰ After the game, Barnett once again spoke to Robert Kennedy via phone. Barnett was incredulous when Robert Kennedy revealed that the National Guard would be mobilized. The attorney general also revealed that President Kennedy intended to make a statement on national television explaining his decision to mobilize the National Guard happened because secret negotiations with Barnett for a more peaceable solution had broken down. With his options having run out with the entry of the military into the situation and looming disclosure of his craven bargaining with the Kennedys, Barnett seemed to recognize that allowing Meredith to register was his last resort. In that conversation they agreed that Meredith would register on Monday, October 1.²²¹ At the time of the phone call, there were twenty thousand soldiers from various battalions preparing to deploy to Mississippi upon the president’s order. They were not to be the tip of the spear in any action; any preparations

²¹⁹ “Walker Demands a ‘Vocal Protest,’” *New York Times*, September 30, 1962, p.69.

²²⁰ Eagles, p.337.

²²¹ Doyle, p.121.

involving the military were being undertaken to act as a support structure for federal power exercised directly through the DoJ via the six hundred assembled U.S. marshals, deputy marshals and deputized personnel from other departments.²²² It was the plan of the Kennedy administration for the marshals to be the first line of defense for Meredith and for the marshals to arrest Barnett if that proved necessary.²²³ Kennedy prepared a presidential proclamation (No. 3497), declaring that Barnett had prevented the enforcement of court orders and calling for Barnett to cease and desist. The president also federalized the Mississippi National Guard minutes after midnight on September 30, 1962, with an executive order (No. 11053).²²⁴

The president's decision to federalize the state guard came as he and the DoJ received reports from the FBI of the worsening situation in Oxford. Edwin Walker's inflammatory speeches inspired groups from across the country to send demonstrators to muster in Mississippi, most of them promising to come armed. Chairmen of Citizens' Councils in Louisiana and Florida also offered their support. Two Alabama county sheriffs stepped forward with offers to cross state lines into Mississippi with "posses" of hundreds of men. The FBI also caught wind of Klansmen, militias, John Birchers and other assorted extreme right-wing groups around the country volunteering members to come to Oxford.²²⁵ The FBI even picked up one particularly bizarre report of a wealthy Barnett supporter having arranged for four WWII-era surplus Canadian Royal Air Force P-51 Mustang fighter planes to be laundered and sent to Mississippi for Barnett to command.²²⁶

On the afternoon of Sunday, September 30, 1962, the U.S. Marshals based in Memphis were given word to prepare immediately to travel to the University of Mississippi. The

²²² Ibid, p.341.

²²³ Eagles, p.338.

²²⁴ Ibid, p.339.

²²⁵ Doyle, p.99.

²²⁶ Ibid, p.100.

beginnings of the chaos that was to unfold showed itself then, too, when the Gen. Creighton Abrams, the officer in charge of the military forces mustering at the Naval Air Station in Memphis, was not informed that the marshals were heading to Oxford to face a mob.²²⁷ Chancellor J.D. Williams of the university also remained in the dark about Meredith being brought to campus Sunday afternoon, so could make no concrete plans for maximizing security. Meredith himself also did not know that the DoJ had decided to put in motion its plan on Sunday afternoon as he waited at the naval facility in Memphis.²²⁸ The first contingent of 170 marshals arrived in Oxford via airplane at 2:30 that afternoon. Members of the Department of Justice overseeing the federal efforts, including Nicholas Katzenbach, a deputy attorney general, arrived soon thereafter and proceeded with the deputies to the university campus. The group, riding in army trucks and Border Patrol cars, was met by Colonel T.B. Birdsong, the head of the Mississippi Highway Patrol, and led onto campus. The original plan for Meredith's registration had it taking place that Sunday evening at the Lyceum building on campus, but the plan was postponed again until the following morning, Monday, October 1. It was decided that Meredith would stay on campus that night rather than create more risk by moving him and his band of federal protectors. Meredith had been assigned a discreet sleeping place on campus in a dormitory room assigned for U.S. marshal use. Subject to the same concerns for their safety, the marshals also stayed on campus rather than adjourning to their tent city on the outskirts of town. This turn of events had the marshals, wearing metal helmets and armed with clubs, revolvers and tear gas, continuing to man their posts at the Lyceum throughout the night.²²⁹ Katzenbach had the marshals keep guard at the Lyceum rather than draw them back to Baxter Hall, the dorm Meredith had been assigned for the nights, so as not to draw attention of potential troublemakers

²²⁷ Ibid, p.124.

²²⁸ Eagles, p.345.

²²⁹ Ibid, p.349.

to where Meredith was located. The position around the Lyceum taken up by the federal agents, though, was hastily organized and tactically exposed due to the unsecured neighboring buildings and tree-filled park adjoining the Lyceum.²³⁰

The flashpoint of the coming riot had not yet come by 5:00 p.m. on Sunday evening. Campus was still quiet, and the Circle, the wooded park adjoining the Lyceum, was occupied only by squirrels. As word spread of the marshals' presence, hundreds of curious onlookers descended on the Circle. The Mississippi Highway Patrolmen who were tasked with keeping campus clear of outsiders could not stop the flow of campus insiders toward the Circle.²³¹ At 5:00 p.m., Katzenbach was at the office of a university official communicating with Robert Kennedy via phone. Katzenbach recommended that Meredith be flown in from Memphis at that time, and left with several others in a Border Patrol car to go to the Oxford airport to collect Meredith.²³² The situation around the Lyceum and in the Circle was beginning to degrade simultaneously. Hundreds of students returning to campus heard of the marshals' presence and began going to the vicinity. Confederate battle flags began to appear, and the atmosphere took on an air of standoffishness. Chancellor Williams was unprepared for the growing crowds, and entered the mass to encourage students to return to their dorms and stay away.²³³ By 6:00 p.m., the crowd numbered more than one thousand, compared to around 450 marshals. The marshals were remaining calm and impersonally courteous in the face of the more boisterous, insulting crowds. The highway patrol by this time had given up on anything other than directing traffic and watched with the same interest as the crowd of civilians. It is notable that no state or school officials tried to quash the growing throng of increasingly vocal onlookers. Williams, despite

²³⁰ Doyle, p.133.

²³¹ Ibid, p.134.

²³² Eagles, p.350.

²³³ Doyle, p.135.

appealing to individual students to clear out, never fully employed his authority to enjoin the students in the crowd to leave.²³⁴ It was around 7:00 p.m. that the assaults on marshals and members of the press began. Some members of the crowd began to rush toward the marshals outside the Lyceum and spit on them, though the marshals did not retaliate. One of the 359 campus-registered journalists had his camera and car destroyed by the mob. Indifferent state police helped him and his wife who was accompanying him only when it seemed serious bodily harm was imminent.²³⁵

The leadership of the state of Mississippi committed serious errors in judgment once it was clear the mob outside the Lyceum was becoming more emboldened. In addition to a leadership vacuum in the Lyceum area, State Senator George Yarborough exacerbated the quickly degrading situation when he authorized state troopers to leave the area. His order left the marshals alone against an uncontrolled civilian mob without even the indifferent control exhibited by the state troopers.²³⁶ About the same time the state troopers were cut loose from making any overtures toward keeping order, Meredith arrived at the Oxford airport from Memphis. Katzenbach traveled with Meredith in a federal car escorted by a state highway patrol quickly and without much notice through a side entrance to campus. Meredith arrived at Baxter Hall, his dormitory, and quickly settled in with a small, discreet force of marshals guarding his room.²³⁷

At 7:30 p.m., Barnett gave a statewide radio and television broadcast stating that Meredith was on campus, enraging many in the crowd who had not yet heard the news. In his

²³⁴ Eagles, p.353.

²³⁵ Ibid, p.354.

²³⁶ Claude Sitton, "3,000 Troops Put Down Mississippi Rioting And Seize 200 as Negro Attends Classes; Ex-Gen. Walker is Held for Insurrection," *The New York Times*, October 2, 1962, <http://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/100262race-ra.html>

²³⁷ Doyle, p.138.

address, Barnett condemned the federal government by saying it was “trampling on the sovereignty of this great state... You are destroying the Constitution of this great nation. May God have mercy on your souls.”²³⁸ Barnett’s ersatz submission statement came only after President Kennedy threatened to disclose the governor’s collusion with the federal government, which would certainly have had a detrimental effect on the rest of the remainder of his term.²³⁹ By 8:00 p.m., the situation in the Circle had seriously deteriorated into the beginnings of a riot. The crowd had begun hurling various missiles at the marshals in front of the Lyceum. A black soldier who was the driver of one of the army trucks that had transported the marshals was sprayed in the face with a fire extinguisher by a rowdy youth as the driver sat in the cab of the truck.²⁴⁰ As DoJ personnel on the scene tried to communicate with Robert Kennedy in Washington to ask how to proceed, chief marshal McShane ordered the marshals to don their gas masks and fire a volley of tear gas to drive back the crowd. Robert Kennedy tried to alert the president of the ugly turn of events prior to the president’s televised national address, but could not get there in time. President Kennedy appealed for peace and stated that he intended to use the minimum amount of force necessary to ensure federal law was obeyed. His address was too late to appeal to the rioters on the University of Mississippi campus.²⁴¹

The riot continued for hours, with the marshals following a strategy of launching tear gas grenades to push back the mass, then retreating to the Lyceum. The missiles in the form of rocks, bricks and caustic chemicals continued to be hurled by the rioters. More and more outsiders flowed into campus with little to stop them. The mob’s numbers grew to more than two thousand in the first hours of the riot. Bullets fired from unknown positions began to strike dozens of

²³⁸ Ibid, p.146.

²³⁹ <http://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/100262race-ra.html>.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, p.139.

²⁴¹ Eagles, p.358.

marshals, who did not have enough emergency medical aid resources on hand.²⁴² The marshals also had none of the materiel that was standard crowd-control gear: bullhorns, walkie-talkies, mobile light sources, police barriers and body armor.²⁴³ Discriminate attacks against the marshals also spread to journalists. Cameras and notebooks served as beacons for the mob to home in their attacks on. With the police presence on campus minimal, those journalists under attack found themselves with almost no protection. In many cases, the more disciplined university students who were trying to maintain order swooped in to pull to safety journalists who were being pummeled. Anglo-French journalist Paul Guihard was less lucky – he was shot at very close range in the back, the bullet piercing his heart and killing him. The inflammatory ex-general Edwin Walker also materialized on campus at this time. Many in the crowd implored him to organize the mob and lead them against the marshals at the Lyceum, though he did not manage to do so. Some local clergy tried to calm the mob by explaining that Meredith was not actually inside the Lyceum.²⁴⁴ By 9:30 p.m., one university student recalled that she recognized almost no one in the Circle among the riotous crowd; most were “rednecks” unfamiliar to her.²⁴⁵

At 10:00 p.m., deputy attorney general Katzenbach received authority from Washington to call in the local National Guard unit to the Lyceum to act as reinforcements for the besieged marshals.²⁴⁶ Katzenbach realized the situation called for escalation of the federal effort and resisted on the marshals’ request for permission to open fire on students with pistols.²⁴⁷ Katzenbach then called Captain Murry Falkner of the Mississippi National Guard unit based in Oxford and instructed him to bring his local troop to the Lyceum. As the marshals waited for

²⁴² Ibid, p.359.

²⁴³ Doyle, p.141.

²⁴⁴ Eagles, p.362.

²⁴⁵ Doyle, p.143.

²⁴⁶ Eagles, p.365.

²⁴⁷ Doyle, p.181.

assistance from the federalized National Guard, the situation worsened as more and more people bypassed roadblocks to pour into campus. At least two hundred of the five hundred marshals sustained injuries from the various missiles, chemicals and bullets being shot their way.²⁴⁸ Another bystander in the Circle, a local jukebox repairman, became the second fatality of the night when struck by a bullet from an unknown pistol.²⁴⁹ Captain Falkner, when his convoy of four jeeps and two trucks reached campus, was injured when a brick was thrown through the windshield of his truck and broke his arm.²⁵⁰

President Kennedy and Barnett continued to maintain phone contact frequently throughout the night. Barnett thought he detected wavering in the president's resolve to see that federal court orders were obeyed, while Kennedy seemed to not fully appreciate the magnitude of the riot that was raging on the University of Mississippi campus. Kennedy began to become frustrated by the lagging response of the army to send troops from staging areas in Memphis to Oxford. The first army M.P.s arrived at the Oxford airport at 1:00 a.m. and arrived on campus at 2:15 a.m. Despite the presence of the army, the riot continued as more guardsmen arrived on campus and joined the marshals at the Lyceum and at Baxter Hall where Meredith was staying. It was not until 6:15 a.m. that General Charles Billingslea, the field commander, declared campus secure.²⁵¹ The rioting on campus, though, was pushed into Oxford proper. The mayor, Richard Elliott, contacted the FBI for help, and the army was on the town square within twenty minutes.²⁵²

That morning, October 1, 1962, at 7:55 a.m., Meredith, Chief U.S. Marshal McShane and Assistant U.S. Attorney General John Doar rode in a Border Patrol under marshal guard to the

²⁴⁸ Eagles, p.367.

²⁴⁹ Doyle, p.215.

²⁵⁰ Eagles, p.367.

²⁵¹ Ibid, p.369.

²⁵² Ibid, p.370.

Lyceum.²⁵³ With marshals and army guardsmen still surrounding the Lyceum, Meredith registered in the office of registrar Robert Ellis at 8:15 am. He paid his tuition and fees of \$230 there, then left for his first class almost an hour later, thus ending segregation at the University of Mississippi.²⁵⁴

The University of Alabama

The desegregation of the University of Alabama on June 11, 1963, by Vivian Malone and James Hood was not the first attempt on the part of black applicants to gain admission to the university, nor was it the first time a black applicant gained entry to the school. The 1963 desegregation is the exemplar in this study of the desegregation of the University of Alabama for several reasons. First, it takes place during the same era as the desegregations of the University of Georgia and the University of Mississippi, and less than one year after the latter. It is being included to the exclusion of the 1956 admission of black graduate student Autherine Juanita Lucy because Lucy's presence at the university lasted only several days before unrest caused the university Board of Trustees to suspend Lucy for reasons of public safety in the face of growing unrest. The Board of Trustees later expelled Lucy when a lawsuit she filed against the university implied the trustees were complicit in the riots that drove her from campus. The 1963 desegregation was the one that stuck. Lucy's admission is also being excluded because she was admitted as a graduate student in library science. It is the contention of the researcher that the desegregation of undergraduate education is of greater symbolic importance in the civil rights movement. Undergraduate life is what defines the culture of a university. The majorities of undergraduate populations at public universities tend to be composed of in-state residents, thus the desegregation of undergraduate education was more likely to have made a resistant

²⁵³ Doyle, p.257.

²⁵⁴ Eagles, p.371.

population feel an affront had been committed. Graduate-level education at universities also takes place in a different atmosphere than undergraduate-level education. Graduate students have fewer classes that convene less frequently and at different hours than undergraduate classes, thus graduate students are less visible and less numerous on campus in comparison to undergraduates. Comparison between the Lucy case in 1956 and Hamilton/Holmes in 1961 and Meredith in 1962 would not be nearly as insightful as a comparison with the University of Alabama's 1963 desegregation. The Lucy desegregation, though, does help provide context for the comparably peaceful 1963 desegregation, so some details are included.

Autherine Juanita Lucy

Autherine Lucy, a 1952 English B.A. graduate of the all-black Miles College in Fairfield, Alabama, was one of two women active in the Alabama NAACP who applied for admission to the University of Alabama in 1953. Lucy, along with her classmate from Miles College, Polly Anne Myers, sought out help from the NAACP for their applications as graduate students to the University of Alabama. Thurgood Marshall and Constance Baker Motley – both of whom would be involved as counsel in later university desegregation suits profiled in this study – were assigned as counsel to the women. Arthur Shores, a black Alabama attorney, joined the LDF team. The University of Alabama had maintained a policy of ignoring black applicants and wished for the state to continue the tradition of “Jim Crow scholarships” that paid for qualified black applicants, of which there were 103 in 1955, to attend out-of-state colleges.²⁵⁵ After two years and nine months, their case, *Lucy et al v. Adams* (William F. Adams, the Dean of Admissions at the University of Alabama), was ruled upon in favor of the plaintiffs by U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama Judge H. Hobart Grooms. Upon appeal, the

²⁵⁵ E. Culpepper Clark, *The Schoolhouse Door: Segregation's Last Stand at the University of Alabama* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 44.

decision was unanimously upheld in the U.S. Supreme Court in October 1955.²⁵⁶ An injunction was granted to the plaintiffs that enjoined the University of Alabama from denying Lucy and Myers admission.²⁵⁷ The Board of Trustees of the university, however, still managed to deny Myers admission based on her “conduct and marital record” (Myers had married since the initial suit) while admission was granted to Lucy. Myers had been the more outspoken and mature of the two applicants, and the board hoped that denying Myers would cause Lucy to reconsider attending the university alone.²⁵⁸ Lucy decided to proceed with her enrollment, and began classes on February 3, 1956.²⁵⁹

Lucy’s attendance at the University of Alabama as a graduate student would last only a few days before rioting caused university administrators to act to quell the unrest by suspending Lucy. A riot with up to one thousand people began on the night of February 2, 1956, in Tuscaloosa, followed by another on February 3. The violence broke out when workers from a rubber plant in Tuscaloosa began throwing rocks at the car of the Dean of Women’s car, which had been made available for use in transporting Lucy to classes on February 3. The car, which did not contain Lucy, was destroyed. While Lucy was inside a campus building attending her first class, a mob containing many Ku Klux Klan members surrounded the building. The mob eventually moved on to attack a post office, a bus and an American flag display, with three young men arrested.²⁶⁰

For Lucy’s protection, she was spirited off campus by the Tuscaloosa police and brought to the offices of the local black newspaper, *The Alabama Citizen*. After her location was

²⁵⁶ Clark, p.55.

²⁵⁷ *Lucy v. Adams*. 350 U.S. 1. (1955).

²⁵⁸ Clark, p.56.

²⁵⁹ Anthony J. Blasi, *Segregationist Violence and Civil Rights Movements in Tuscaloosa* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1980), p.35.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 37.

compromised by drive-bys and threatening phone calls, the owner of the newspaper drove her to Birmingham for her safety.²⁶¹ The university Board of Trustees barred Lucy from returning to campus for reasons of public safety after a final demonstration had to be broken up by police on February 6.²⁶² Lucy filed suit in federal court against the university to petition for reinstatement, and was again represented by her NAACP team. In the case presided over by Judge Grooms, Lucy's lawyers accused the university Board of Trustees of being complicit in planning the riots that drove Lucy from the campus. On February 29, 1956, Grooms ruled in favor of the defendants by refusing to hold the university and board members in contempt of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling, saying the officials did underestimate the resistance they met, but were not negligent in doing so.²⁶³

Lucy's expulsion stood at the time, though the University of Alabama ultimately overturned it in 1980. Though there were elements of social and religious life in Tuscaloosa that appealed for peace in the Lucy desegregation, resistance was widespread among townspeople and students. No special preparations for an orderly desegregation had been made – no police presence, no plan for visiting press and no emergency measures had been taken. There also was not much in the way of local press coverage, thus scant opportunity for the populace to conceptualize of what a peaceful desegregation would mean. *Tuscaloosa News* editor Buford Boone, who would later become a behind-the-scenes operator in the nonviolent 1963 University of Alabama desegregation, wrote a Pulitzer-winning editorial entitled "What a Price for Peace" in the aftermath of Lucy's banishment. In that piece, he criticized university administrators for capitulating to pressure from a mob²⁶⁴. Just as relevant as the lessons learned from security gaps

²⁶¹ Ibid, p.38.

²⁶² Ibid, p.39.

²⁶³ Clark, p.101.

²⁶⁴ Blasi, p.67.

and lackluster preparations in 1956, the moderating influence of Boone and other like-minded newspaper editors would play an important role in promoting a peaceful desegregation in 1963. In an interesting coda to the Lucy incident, Lucy did ultimately return to the University of Alabama and earned a Masters in elementary education in 1992.

Vivian Malone and James Hood

The desegregation of the University of Alabama took place on June 11, 1963. Integration was accomplished by two black applicants, Vivian Malone and James A. Hood. They were chosen from among hundreds of potential applicants by the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund to receive legal assistance with their applications. Malone and Hood were both academic standouts at their high schools, and in Hood's case, at his Atlanta college. Malone came from a civil rights-activist, working class family who stressed the importance of their children's educations from an early age – Malone's older brothers had already attended Tuskegee Institute. During her years in high school at Central High in Mobile, Alabama, Malone was a high achiever who had her sights set on college. When a paperwork foul-up caused her matriculation at the black Alabama A&M College to be delayed until fall 1961, a neighbor saw an opening for Malone to take a shot at ending segregation. Lewis Koen, who was active in the civil rights movement, heard of Malone's delay in attending Alabama A&M, and convinced Malone to apply to the University of Alabama's Mobile Center extension campus along with several other black applicants. Part of what fueled Malone's decision to apply was that neither Alabama A&M nor Alabama State offered accounting, her desired major.²⁶⁵ Because of her academic achievements in high school as well as her willingness to remain in the application process despite intimidation from whites

²⁶⁵ Ibid, p.175.

who visited her home, Malone was deemed by the LDF to be one of the applicants who stood the best chance of weathering the daunting process, and she received their support.²⁶⁶

James A. Hood, from Gadsden, Alabama, also made the LDF's short-list for potentially successful candidates. Hood was a top-notch athlete and student body president at Carver High in Gadsden. He was also known as a good student, though he had a nervous disposition for which he learned to compensate with a clever sense of humor. Hood's middle-class family was also very active in the local civil rights movement in Gadsden, and Hood continued his activism when he went to Atlanta's Clark College. Hood was already a sophomore at Clark College when he applied to the University of Alabama. His decision to apply stemmed from his realization that while in high school he had participated in a scurrilous study by a University of North Carolina professor that found blacks were "about 200,000 years behind whites in developing brain structures associated with higher mentality."²⁶⁷ He confronted the professor via a letter, to which the professor replied that Hood was obviously lacking in the mental capacity to understand the study. A friend of Hood's at the headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), a civil rights group, suggested that Hood seek retribution by applying to the University of Alabama. The second factor influencing Hood's decision to apply was his interest in becoming a professional minister. He wished to study clinical psychology, which was not offered at Clark College, but which was available at the University of Alabama. Hood's friend as the SCLC put him in touch with the LDF, and Hood made their list of qualified candidates.²⁶⁸

Malone and Hood were not alone in their decisions to apply. Attempts by blacks to integrate public universities in Alabama were increasing at the time. Eighty-six black students from Alabama A&M applied to the University of Alabama school of nursing in Birmingham on

²⁶⁶ Ibid, p.176.

²⁶⁷ Ibid, p.177.

²⁶⁸ Ibid, p.177.

January 15, 1962, but all were denied with excuses that quotas were filled or enrollment had closed. University of Alabama President Frank Rose told Governor George Wallace that the university had turned aside more than 230 black applicants at the time, but Rose said in later years that the university was actually seeking out qualified candidates for desegregation, and even sought out help from Martin Luther King, Jr. The university itself played no role in actually selecting which candidates applied, however, and sat on the sidelines at the time.²⁶⁹

Governor George Wallace, the lawsuit and the stand in the schoolhouse door

Governor George Wallace would prove to be a pivotal and puzzling character in the desegregation of the University of Alabama. Outwardly, he created a façade of defiance of the federal government that was consistent with his image as a segregationist and a supporter of states' rights. In private, though, his actions seemed to be motivated by a desire to avoid the sort of violence that marred the desegregation of the University of Mississippi in 1962. His true motivations vis-à-vis the desegregation and, more generally, the black populace of Alabama, have remained a subject of debate. Wallace was elected governor for four terms, the first in 1962. He was elected on a staunch segregationist platform in 1962, but modified his stance each time to suit the cultural climate. Wallace famously recanted his segregationist views in 1979, before his last term as governor (1983 – 1987).²⁷⁰

Wallace entered government in Alabama after returning from a tour as an aircraft mechanic in World War II. After working for Governor Chauncey Sparks, Wallace won a seat in the state legislature in 1946, and stayed until 1953. Wallace had an early record of supporting big businesses and white supremacists, such as the Black Belt-Big Mule alliance of industrialists that was in favor of establishing low-skill jobs that were rooted in natural resource extraction and

²⁶⁹ Ibid, p.176.

²⁷⁰ Glenn T. Eskew, *George C. Wallace*. <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1676> (2011, January 3).

export. Wallace's support for these initiatives curried favor among conservative, rural white voters who stood to be employed in these industries, versus the long-term gains from value-added manufacturing and educational jobs that were lost in the short sale.²⁷¹

Wallace first ran for the governorship of Alabama in 1958 as a reaction to Governor Jim Folsom's mild response to the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. During the campaign, Wallace accidentally attracted the support of the NAACP through his condemnation of an opponent's Klu Klux Klan ties. The unwanted endorsement contributed to Wallace's sound loss, and led him to more actively court segregationist votes in future elections. He also developed an electoral strategy of staging conflicts with the federal government from his re-assumed position as a circuit court judge after his first gubernatorial campaign. His tactics, such as locking away county voting records from the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, appealed to many conservative Alabama voters. Wallace's second run at the governor's office in 1962 was based on segregationist rhetoric, and was when he made his infamous vow to "stand in the schoolhouse door" in order to defy federal court orders to desegregate schools and universities in Alabama. He won the governorship, and embarked on an incumbency where his populist, racist rhetoric laid a foundation for his strong support among conservative whites. Wallace's popularity also emboldened him to heighten racial tensions and take extreme liberties with his office, such as creating a Sovereignty Commission that mirrored the eponymous organization in Mississippi, which also unconstitutionally spied on its citizens.²⁷²

Wallace made his first specific move in the University of Alabama desegregation proceedings on March 18, 1963, when he called a meeting of the university Board of Trustees to discuss applicants to the Huntsville extension campus. At the time, it was still unclear exactly

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid.

which applicants and which campus would be the first to desegregate, and two black federal employees based in Huntsville aimed to continue their educations at that city's campus.²⁷³ At the meeting of the board, Wallace made clear he wanted to force the LDF into a longer and more complex court battle based on larger constitutional questions, rather than to allow them to argue that the 1955 injunction ordered by Judge Grooms was still valid. Wallace also diverged from the haphazard scheming that characterized Mississippi governor Ross Barnett's approach to desegregation less than a year earlier when the Alabama governor made clear he expected the Board of Trustees to abide by the eventual court ruling, whatever it would be. Wallace knew he had painted himself into a corner with his campaign promise to make a stand, but he also knew he had to make the stand alone, without the involvement of other state and university officers.²⁷⁴

Wallace's approach to the desegregation, defiant though it was, was equally concerned with maintaining public law and order as much as it was a political play to ensure the governor was able to save face during an increasingly likely desegregation. To that end, Wallace consulted with high-ranking members of the Citizens' Councils in Jackson, Mississippi, to attempt to learn more about what had gone wrong in the desegregation of the University of Mississippi.²⁷⁵

Wallace also sought to keep communications with the federal government open. On April 25, 1963, the governor invited U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy to the governor's mansion to discuss the coming federal court hearing, for which suit was filed by the LDF on behalf of Malone, Hood and another applicant, Sandy English, on April 19.²⁷⁶ The discussion between Kennedy and Wallace became heated at times, and it ended with both sticking to their original positions and with no concrete plans for going forward having been reached. In comparison to

²⁷³ Clark, p.178.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, p.179.

²⁷⁵ Ibid, p.180.

²⁷⁶ Ibid, p.184.

Ross Barnett, Wallace showed that he understood the nuances of desegregation and how they might affect the population of the state. He pleaded with Kennedy to have the federal government proceed toward desegregation slowly, if it was so ordered by the court. The governor did not want a repeat of the violence in his state by the same elements who rioted in Mississippi.²⁷⁷ Wallace, for his understanding of the potential danger posed by currents of federal skepticism in Alabama, still played to their desires for maintenance of a separate-but-equal Jim Crow society. He told Kennedy that he wanted to improve life for blacks, but not through university education. Instead, Wallace asked the attorney general for help in bringing to Alabama more vocational programs and industry which would employ the black underclass.²⁷⁸

The leaders of Tuscaloosa civic and business life were not waiting for Wallace to decide on a course of action. As early as October 1962, there was a private meeting of prominent citizens at the home of one of Tuscaloosa's leading industrialists to discuss strategies of how to avoid violence when the inevitable desegregation of the university came. The group, which included *Tuscaloosa News* editor Buford Boone, University of Alabama head football coach Paul "Bear" Bryant, as well as bank presidents and members of the local school board. Boone, the newspaper editor, eventually became the most deeply involved in the effort, as demonstrated from his editorial perch in the *Tuscaloosa News*. One of the other leaders, George LeMaistre, a bank president, said of their motives for the extra-governmental meetings: "The relatively recent experience in Little Rock and the subsequent damage to the business community in that city made a very persuasive argument for allowing the orders of the [Supreme] Court to be carried out without active resistance or violence."²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ Ibid, p.185.

²⁷⁸ Ibid, p.186.

²⁷⁹ Blasi, p.61.

The concerned civic and business leaders did more than just talk to one another about their concerns about a crisis of desegregation. They began to meet with leaders in other communities in order to establish a statewide basis of support for law and order in the event of university integration. Boone plied well-connected contacts around Alabama to in turn put pressure on the office of the governor to ensure peace and adherence to law. The group influenced others to also contact the university board of trustees to press for them to adhere to the court rulings, regardless of Wallace's intentions. The Alabama State Chamber of Commerce lent its support to the cause of peaceful desegregation by taking out full-page ads in state newspapers that urged state officials to maintain law and order if desegregation came. The business and civic leaders traveled to Jackson, Mississippi, to further investigate what went wrong in the integration of the University of Mississippi. They also sought to understand the motives of black applicants to white universities, and met with four of the black applicants to the University of Alabama, as well as blacks who had recently integrated Clemson University in South Carolina.²⁸⁰ The group of civic and business leaders ultimately drew up a nine-step plan for maintaining law and order during desegregation of the university, beginning with a statement from the State Chamber of Commerce, and gradually boxing in Wallace so that he would have to allow the applicants to register.²⁸¹

The University of Alabama administration also moved ahead with its own plans to ensure an orderly transition to integration independent of Wallace. University president Frank Rose tended to talk out of both sides of his mouth – he cooperated with Wallace in performing background checks on the applicants to try to find defects of character or intellect, but also worked of his own accord to head off anti-intellectual and segregationist political interference by

²⁸⁰ Ibid, p.62.

²⁸¹ Clark, p.187.

building support within the Tuscaloosa business community. Several deans who had been at the university during the Lucy desegregation were described as being extremely angry at the ugly turn of events 1955, and were determined not to let the same thing happen the next time.

University officials and forty student leaders held a retreat in October 1962 that focused on discussion of how peaceful desegregation could be achieved. On November 9, 1962, the university board of trustees passed a resolution that called for law and order, with the university faculty passing a similar resolution on November 14.²⁸²

The LDF filed suit on behalf of applicants Vivian Malone, James Hood and Sandy English in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama on April 19, 1963. English, a transfer applicant from Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, ultimately did not make the cut with Malone and Hood. The suit was filed with the intent of Malone and English matriculating in the fall semester and Hood in the summer term.²⁸³ When the hearing began on May 16, Judge H. Hobart Grooms – the same federal judge who had ordered an injunction in the 1955 Lucy case – bound University of Alabama Dean of Arts and Sciences Hubert Mate to the 1955 injunction, thus striking down any opportunity for university counsel to steer the scope of the hearing toward larger, more complex constitutional questions. LDF lawyer Constance Baker Motley tried to get Mate to answer whether or not the three plaintiffs would be admitted, but university counsel Andrew Thomas instructed Mate not to answer. On May 17, one of the LDF counsel, Charles Morgan, filed a “show cause” petition to force the university to definitively state whether or not it would admit the black applicants.²⁸⁴ On May 19, Rose told Wallace the background checks performed by university-hired investigators had shown that all the applicants were qualified. The board then voted unanimously to admit Malone and another black applicant,

²⁸² Blasi, p.61.

²⁸³ Clark, p.187.

²⁸⁴ Ibid, p.193.

Dave McGlathery.²⁸⁵ McGlathery was a Navy veteran and an Alabama A&M graduate who was working at the NASA facility in Huntsville. McGlathery applied to the Huntsville branch in order to begin graduate studies.²⁸⁶

The University of Alabama's effort to stave off desegregation ended on May 21, 1963, when Judge Grooms dismissed the university's petition to stay his 1955 injunction in the Lucy case. Grooms declined to delay ordering the university to grant admission to the applicants who made the final cut – Malone and Hood for the Tuscaloosa campus and McGlathery for the Huntsville campus – because the U.S. Supreme Court had, in Grooms' words, "promptly slapped down" the 1955 appeal filed by the university in the Lucy case.²⁸⁷ Part of what shaped Grooms' decision to uphold his eight-year-old injunction was that he felt attitudes on race were changing in Alabama. He noted that he had received fewer threats and dissenting letters during the course of the hearing than he had during the Lucy case. Grooms also felt that, the contemporary turmoil in Birmingham notwithstanding, "the masses of white citizens in Birmingham were not fighting us [over the inevitable outcome]" during the course of the hearing.²⁸⁸ The Supreme Court also declined to hear Wallace's challenge to the injunction.²⁸⁹

By May 21, 1963, the Alabama government had not yet taken any steps toward preparing law enforcement for the desegregation. On that day, Al Lingo, the head of the Alabama state troopers, announced his department would leave the particulars of planning to the local Tuscaloosa police, and that the state police would abide by any decisions the local police made.²⁹⁰ On June 11, 1963, the day of desegregation, 125 of the 825 state troopers under Lingo's

²⁸⁵ Ibid, p.194.

²⁸⁶ Ibid, p.170.

²⁸⁷ Ibid, p.194.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, p.194.

²⁸⁹ Blasi, p.67.

²⁹⁰ Ibid, p.66.

command were present on the university campus.²⁹¹ Prior to that, President Kennedy had federalized part of the Alabama National Guard on May 12, 1963, and ordered 3,000 troops into the state. It was done with the dual purposes of providing security in Birmingham during the riots, as well as having the troops mobilized and ready to move to Tuscaloosa on short notice if additional security was needed there.²⁹² Between 500 and 600 of the guardsmen were sent to Tuscaloosa for the June 12 desegregation.²⁹³ The *Birmingham News* opined that the troop mobilization was done with the university in mind, and less for the Birmingham unrest.²⁹⁴

Wallace's intentions were still unclear to everyone but himself after the May 21st ruling by Grooms. The governor's earlier conversation with Robert Kennedy left the presidential administration wondering, thus their decision to federalize Alabama guardsmen. The Department of Justice opted to keep up the pressure on the governor's office given their desire to avoid Ross Barnett-style indecision and doublespeak leading to a leadership vacuum and bloodshed. On May 21, the DoJ began to individually contact 375 prominent business leaders on a list of prominent Alabama businessmen. They pointed out to the businessmen the negative consequences that awaited commerce in the state if the desegregation devolved into chaos and violence. Eighty percent of those contacted agreed to contact Wallace's office to object to his stated plans for a stand at the university.²⁹⁵

Business and civic leaders also continued to make efforts to affect a peaceful outcome. On May 22, 40 Tuscaloosa businessmen met to discuss strategies for peace because they were concerned both about short-term factory shutdowns due to violence, as well as long-term damage

²⁹¹ Claude Sitton, "Alabama Admits Negro Students; Wallace Bows to Federal Force; Kennedy sees "Moral Crisis" in U.S." *The New York Times*, June 12, 1963, <http://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/061263race-ra.html>.

²⁹² Clark, p.193.

²⁹³ <http://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/061263race-ra.html>.

²⁹⁴ Clark, p.197.

²⁹⁵ Blasi, p.67.

that could result in further tarnishing Alabama's image.²⁹⁶ On May 28, 400 civic leaders in Tuscaloosa gathered at the Stafford Hotel to discuss what else they could do to push Wallace not to obstruct the law. The group passed a resolution that requested the governor remain in the capital, Montgomery, and not interfere with the desegregation. One of the attendees, Circuit Judge Reuben Wright, said the only way to keep federal troops out of Tuscaloosa was to let a few black students into the University of Alabama. The petition was signed by 212 of the attendees.²⁹⁷ As the date of desegregation neared, the city's religious leaders also chimed in to implore their congregations to remain peaceful. The *Tuscaloosa News* reported on June 10, the day before desegregation, that many clergy had delivered sermons reminding their congregations to obey the law.²⁹⁸

The university began making preparations for the desegregation on May 30, when access to campus was restricted to students, faculty and staff. A 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew was enacted, along with a prohibition on groups larger than three people. ROTC cadets were instructed not to wear their uniforms, so as not to spark fears of the presence of federal military personnel on campus. Soft drink machines were removed from campus because of the fear that the drinks' heavy glass bottles could be used as missiles during a riot. The Dean of Men also encouraged students to report to his office rumors of plans for resistance by students.²⁹⁹

Wallace appeared in U.S. District Court on June 3, 1963, in response to the May 24, 1963, DoJ motion for an injunction to prevent a stand by the governor on the Tuscaloosa campus. On June 4, Judge Seybourne H. Lynne enjoined Wallace from blocking the

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p.66.

²⁹⁷ Ibid, p.67.

²⁹⁸ Ibid, p.70.

²⁹⁹ Ibid, p.68.

integration.³⁰⁰ The injunction prohibited Wallace, or any designees, from physically blocking or interfering with the enrollment of the black applicants. More generally, he was also enjoined from seeking to prevent the enrollment of anyone entitled to attend the university under the 1955 Lucy injunction.³⁰¹ Lynne cited biblical scripture in his decision and called for peace. The judge also facilitated a meeting between federal and university officials to improve planning for an orderly integration.³⁰²

Wallace said on June 5 that he still planned defy court orders to go through with his stand to physically prevent the applicants from registering, and would go to jail in order to do so.³⁰³ Privately, Wallace told university president Frank Rose that he was considering foregoing a stand. In an effort to ensure peace was kept, Wallace told the infamous Birmingham Commissioner of Public Safety, Eugene “Bull” Connor to stay away from Tuscaloosa.³⁰⁴ Wallace continued to call for the populace of Alabama to stay away from Tuscaloosa. On June 2, Wallace had made his first appearance on national television when he went on NBC’s *Meet the Press* to address questions about the desegregation. He made it clear that he wanted everyone uninvolved with the desegregation to stay home.³⁰⁵ It was a directive he repeated emphatically over the next several days. The governor ordered 500 Alabama National Guardsmen into Tuscaloosa so that they could quickly be federalized and placed under the command of the president in the event of unrest. Another important step in ensuring law and order during the desegregation came when Wallace convinced the local Klu Klux Klan to avoid the campus on June 11. To placate their own displeasure at the integration, the KKK held a cross-burning and

³⁰⁰ Ibid, p.68

³⁰¹ <http://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/061263race-ra.html>.

³⁰² Blasi, p.68.

³⁰³ Ibid, p.68.

³⁰⁴ Ibid, p.69.

³⁰⁵ Fleming, p.321.

rally in a field on the outskirts of town where the leader, Grand Wizard Robert Shelton, instructed Klansmen to stay away from Tuscaloosa. The KKK agreed to stay away because they, for the first time, faced on-sight arrest and loss of government favors from Wallace.³⁰⁶

The atmosphere of Tuscaloosa began to become more tense as 500 news reporters began to flood into the town.³⁰⁷ Buford Boone met with President Rose to develop a plan for controlling information and quashing rumors, so that the press descending into town would not accidentally spread untruths. It was an important strategy for helping to maintain order that was absent in both the University of Mississippi and 1955 University of Alabama desegregations. An Associated Press reporter was retained as a public relations point man, and the university provided reporters with facilities with typewriters, phones and darkrooms for developing photographs.³⁰⁸ The press grew tense as Wallace's intentions were kept private. They, like the populace, were left to wonder what Wallace would do on June 11. On the morning of June 10 at the hotel where many of the reporters were staying, a waiter dropped a tray of plates in the restaurant, causing a room full of reporters to jump or dive for cover at the sound of breaking glass.³⁰⁹

On the night of Monday, September 10, 1962, Wallace still did not know what he was going to do the next day when Malone and Hood were to come to campus for registration. That night, Winton Blount, the president of the Alabama State Chamber of Commerce, managed to get through to Robert F. Kennedy in Washington, D.C. During that call, Kennedy agreed to a plan in which Deputy U.S. Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, the highest-ranking DoJ

³⁰⁶ Blasi, p.69.

³⁰⁷ Fleming, p.321.

³⁰⁸ Blasi, p.73.

³⁰⁹ Ibid, p.73.

official in Tuscaloosa, would confront Wallace. Malone and Hood would wait in a car nearby.³¹⁰ The plan allowed for Wallace to make his stand, but also to not directly violate the injunction barring him from blocking the *applicants*.³¹¹ Wallace to this point had been meticulous in planning out his resistance. He had backed himself into a corner with his 1963 inaugural address promise of “segregation now, segregation forever.” Wallace risked losing most of his political cache in the state if he capitulated too easily; he risked contempt of court, jail time and his governorship if he resisted. The solution reached on the eleventh hour with Robert Kennedy was the only solution in which the governor could save face through a technicality.³¹²

At 10:00 a.m. on June 11, 1963, Wallace arrived at Foster Auditorium on the University of Alabama’s Tuscaloosa campus. Four federal officials arrived after Wallace and went into the building a few minutes after Wallace’s arrival. The scheduled time of Malone and Hood’s registration of 10:30 a.m. passed without the appearance of the students. At 10:48 a.m., three cars pulled up to the front of the auditorium, and several federal officials emerged, including Katzenbach, Macon L. Weaver, the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Alabama, and Peyton Norville, Jr., the ranking U.S. marshal in the area. At their arrival, Wallace was waiting in front of the entrance to the building behind a lectern. The governor had a microphone hooked to a loudspeaker. When Katzenbach told Wallace he was there with a proclamation from President Kennedy ordering Wallace to end his stand, Wallace interrupted and read a statement citing the Tenth Amendment and states’ rights. The federal officials returned to their cars and took Malone and Hood to their respective dormitories. It was reported that student council members welcomed Hood to his dormitory.³¹³

³¹⁰ Ibid, p.74.

³¹¹ <http://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/061263race-ra.html>.

³¹² Blasi, p.75.

³¹³ <http://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/061263race-ra.html>.

Shortly before 2:00 p.m. General Henry Graham, the commander of the now-federalized Alabama National Guard, arrived. At 3:15 p.m., three troop carriers filled with armed guardsmen arrived at a building near the auditorium. A second convoy arrived shortly thereafter and took up positions near the auditorium. Katzenbach and other federal officials then arrived and conferred with Graham. Graham, flanked by four sergeants, then strode toward the entrance to Foster Auditorium where Wallace waited. Graham said to Wallace, “It is my sad duty to ask you step aside under the orders of the President of the United States.” Wallace responded by pulling a piece of paper from his pocket, read a brief statement, and said to Graham, “I know that this is a bitter pill for you to swallow.” The governor reiterated his wishes that Alabamians refrain from violence and rioting. He vowed to continue the fight from Montgomery. Wallace left with his aides, and a few minutes later, federal officials escorted Malone and Hood into the auditorium where they registered for classes.³¹⁴

The night of June 11, President Kennedy went on national television to tell the nation of his decision to deliver to Congress a new civil rights bill “to enact legislation giving all Americans the right to be served in facilities which are open to the public – hotels, restaurants, theatres, retail stores and similar establishments. This seems to me to be an elementary right. Its denial is an arbitrary indignity that no American in 1963 should have to endure...” The bill went before Congress on June 20, 1963, was stronger than a bill that had died in debate earlier in the year. It would outlaw segregation in all public accommodations, allow the U.S. attorney general to initiate school desegregation and would also give the attorney general the ability to cut off federal funding to institutions and programs in which discrimination occurred. The bill passed

³¹⁴ Ibid.

the House in early 1964, then the Senate on June 19, 1964. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law on July 2, 1964.³¹⁵

³¹⁵ Juan Williams, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), p.195.

CHAPTER THREE - METHODOLOGY

Newspapers Examined

The researcher began to investigate the question of how the mass media might have influenced public reactions to public university desegregations in the South with a cursory examination of the history of the desegregation of the University of Mississippi by James Meredith in 1962. The researcher was familiar with that instance of desegregation because of his location in Oxford, Mississippi, where the University of Mississippi (also known as Ole Miss) is based.

The researcher undertook a review of literature and websites pertaining to civil rights history to reacquaint himself with the order of events in the Civil Rights Era, beginning with the end of the American Civil War, followed by the Jim Crow era of strict racial segregation of public and private facilities in the southern United States, and ending with the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which bookends the era according to popular consensus of historians. The researcher undertook that review with a focus on university desegregations in the South in order to provide some context for understanding the University of Mississippi's particularly disorderly desegregation, and why there are few other university desegregations that are as popularly known, level of upheaval notwithstanding. Prior to further investigation, the researcher was aware of difficulties with desegregation at Ole Miss due to both personal familiarity and pop culture – besides a Bob Dylan song, there are many books available on the subject of James Meredith and the university's unseemly handling of its desegregation. Aside from that instance,

the University of Alabama was also known to the researcher as having experienced a difficult desegregation because of the enduring legacy of Alabama's Governor George Wallace and the portrayal of his stand for a few moments in the very popular film *Forrest Gump*. The researcher assumed other southern universities experienced similarly unsmooth desegregations, but they remained unknown to him prior to targeted searches on the subject.

The University of Mississippi was selected for further examination from the outset for several reasons. First, its aforementioned status as a widely known example of racial discord and federal skepticism made it a clear choice. Second, because it is so widely known, it has been the subject of prior academic inquiry – or, at least, examples of academic inquiry about the University of Mississippi are more readily apparent than other instances of desegregation – and has resulted in a wealth of historical accounts. Most importantly to this examination of desegregations vis-à-vis mass media theories, the desegregation of the University of Mississippi and, to a greater degree, the portrayal of minorities in media in Mississippi, has been examined in greater detail through mass media content analyses than was readily apparent in other instances of university desegregation. That is, the researcher found more books and articles that addressed the question of Mississippi media's coverage of James Meredith/the integration of the University of Mississippi than for any other analogous example at another university. Third, the University of Mississippi was chosen because it is the alma mater and flagship university of the home state of the researcher, thus was chosen for a contribution to the scholarly study of a particularly bleak and oftentimes unjust period in Mississippi history.

Through further investigation, primarily on the Internet and academic databases such as Ebscohost and J-Stor, other examples of university desegregations emerged, with none of them, on the surface, appearing to be as volatile and deadly as the University of Mississippi's. The

University of Alabama's desegregation emerged as an early candidate for inclusion because it took place not quite nearly a year later than the University of Mississippi under the same presidential administration – especially the Justice Department under Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy – and with a similarly charismatic and widely popular governor as Mississippi's Ross Barnett. Second, it became apparent that this desegregation has also been studied in some depth, though most often as a period in the biography of George Wallace. This meant the machinations and maneuvering that led to the University of Alabama's (UA) desegregation has been well covered, though not as fully as an event unto itself as University of Mississippi's has been. Nor have the personalities of the integrating students, Vivian Malone and James A. Hood, been examined with the same level of interest as James Meredith, perhaps because of the image of Meredith being one man facing off against an institution is more compelling than dividing it by two, and perhaps because in the years since the integration of Ole Miss, Meredith has behaved erratically and been a source of consternation for those who would prefer to canonize him for his role in the civil rights movement.

Third, it also became apparent that the office of governor would hold great importance in desegregations because of the examples provided by Barnett and Wallace. In both these instances it came down to a governor hoping that he would be able to ignore ever-higher federal court rulings and to continue with practices that had been rendered unconstitutional by *Brown v. Board of Education* and other case law. The researcher surmised that a third example would likely involve a similar, futile deployment of “interposition” to defy the federal government, though perhaps not with as much verve on the part of the governors and unrest on the part of the public as in Mississippi and Alabama.

The third example that emerged was the University of Georgia, though its desegregation took place in 1961, prior to both the University of Mississippi's (1962) and the University of Alabama's (1963). This example was settled upon because of its temporal similarity, location in the Deep South and series of legal maneuvers that led up to desegregation. Though the desegregation of the University of Georgia (UGA) did not take place under the administration of John F. Kennedy – it took place in early January 1961, only a couple weeks prior to his inauguration – it took place in an era that, like the other two desegregations in the subsequent two years, saw him elected in a country with similar social and policy pressures. Besides the quickening civil rights movement, Americans were culturally preoccupied with the Space Race, Red Scare and uneven foreign policy toward Cuba (i.e. the Bay of Pigs fiasco and later Cuban Missile Crisis), as became evident in cursory examinations of period newspapers. These shared traits overshadowed the fact that the Kennedy administration had no role in the University of Georgia desegregation, though it is a moot point because federal intervention was not necessary in the University of Georgia case as will be explained later

The University of Georgia was also chosen because, like the University of Mississippi and the University of Alabama, it was the flagship public university of its state. The University of Georgia was also chosen because of its proximity to Atlanta, the largest and most cosmopolitan city of the Deep South, both then and now. The researcher supposed that a large city such as Atlanta and its relative liberality might have a chilling effect on the potential for the sort of far-right racist views that emerged in the pages of provincial Mississippi newspapers. The initial goal of the study for the researcher's literature review is to give context to the chaotic desegregation of the University of Mississippi, and juxtaposition of cosmopolitanism to the

provincial culture of Mississippi could provide interesting insights that might not be possible with more similar examples.

The initial review of literature on civil rights movement and university desegregation yielded other examples, but these three were settled on because:

1. They were all the flagship universities of their respective states.
2. Their desegregations were contentious, though to varying degrees.
3. They took place in the same era, in consecutive years.
4. They all took place in college towns that were removed geographically from their state capitals.
5. The desegregations all involved the first instances of undergraduate desegregation at their respective universities, which is more culturally important than instances of graduate-level desegregations.
6. Charismatic, widely popular governors opposed the desegregations in all instances, thus proving a point against which newspaper coverage could potentially push or pull, especially within editorial pages.

In order to justify his selection of the three universities in question and to relate their desegregations to mass communications theory, the researcher then undertook a review of media available in the states at that time. In order to narrow the focus of the study, the researcher chose to limit it to newspaper coverage of the desegregations and coverage of an arbitrarily chosen period of time – one month – prior to the day of desegregation. Newspaper coverage was chosen because newspapers were the most widely available sources of news coverage at that time, and were also more widely read. This medium was also selected because of its relatively ready and complete availability to a contemporary researcher, whereas many television or radio broadcasts

from the time would be lost to time or difficult to acquire. Newspapers were also chosen for their mixture of straight news and editorial coverage. This provided two areas in which to analyze coverage of desegregation:

1. Straight news which, according to American journalistic ideals, should be unbiased, thus providing an opportunity to examine if the papers in question lived up to these ideals, and
2. Editorial coverage, which gave columnists and the public an opportunity to air their views on desegregation.

Analysis of hard news was limited to what appeared on the front-page, as this is the first and most widely read page, generally speaking. The front page presents the news that the editors believe is most consequential in the lives of their readers, and is thus a prime example of agenda setting of the press. Analysis was also limited to the front page to ensure manageability of data, as the sizes of news sections varied greatly from day to day and from paper to paper. It served to equalize this source of disparity so that it was more digestible from an analytical point of view. It is also a subjective supposition on the researcher that the front page of a newspaper is more thoroughly read than subsequent news pages; there was no data to be found on that subject. The editorial page was likewise settled upon for the readership draw that it provides. It was the most public and accessible forum for communities at that time, and the insight provided by analysis of this section will serve to show that it could likewise contribute to setting the agenda of the public.

The survey period of one month was settled upon for two reasons. First, because cursory research showed that the last few days prior to desegregation of a university provided most of the material for analysis. Most papers analyzed indicated that there was a legal battle over

desegregation one month prior to the date of desegregation. Setting the survey period to even just a week prior to desegregation would have likely provided enough material for analysis in the cases of daily newspapers, but would have provided very limited samples of the relevant student and weekly newspapers, which the researcher determined were potentially important in setting the agenda of the communities surrounding the universities in question, and, particularly, the students at the universities themselves. The one month period allowed for statistically relevant samples from each paper to be analyzed, while also allowing for a greater understanding on the part of the researcher of the context surrounding each desegregation. Second, it was discovered during additional research on agenda-setting that a one-month period of media coverage prior to an event in is the most statistically significant period for influencing individuals' opinions on a subject.

With the parameters for survey periods set, the researcher then set out to acquire archived copies of the relevant newspapers. Once again, the researcher sought to analyze the front page and editorial page content of the largest state newspaper, the local city newspaper and campus newspaper for one-month period prior to the undergraduate desegregation of the flagship public universities of the states of Georgia (University of Georgia, 1961), Mississippi (University of Mississippi, 1962) and Alabama (University of Alabama, 1963) which will follow. In the case of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, which is the largest newspaper in Georgia as of 2010, it was born of the merger of the *Atlanta Journal* evening paper and *Atlanta Constitution* morning paper. The researcher had difficulty ascertaining individual 1961 circulation figures at the outset of research, thus chose to analyze the *Atlanta Constitution* without realizing it was in fact the *Atlanta Journal* that had the larger circulation. The researcher believes the information gleaned from the *Atlanta Constitution* is valid, regardless of the somewhat lower circulation figures,

since it may be reasoned that at this time the state of Georgia had two flagship newspapers based in the state capital. The selection of the *Atlanta Constitution* also made available for analysis the columns of editor Ralph McGill, whose vociferous opposition to segregation yielded interesting research. The other newspapers surveyed are all still extant, though publication frequencies have in some cases changed over the years. The newspapers analyzed are as follows:

University of Georgia

- *The Atlanta Constitution*
- *The Athens Banner-Herald*
- *The Red & White* (University of Georgia)

University of Mississippi

- *The Jackson Clarion-Ledger*
- *The Oxford Eagle*
- *The Mississippian* (University of Mississippi)

University of Alabama

- *The Birmingham News*
- *The Tuscaloosa News*
- *The Crimson White* (University of Alabama)

CHAPTER FOUR - RESULTS

Newspaper coverage of the desegregation of the University of Georgia

The reaction of the mainstream press to the imminent desegregation of the University of Georgia was one of neutrality and inevitability, at least within the three newspapers analyzed in this study. Thus the agenda they set forth through their non-radical coverage helped set the tone for a desegregation carried out, for the most part, without massive resistance on the part of the populace – the January 11 riot notwithstanding – and without the endless, desperate legal maneuvering on the part of the governor’s office that characterized the later desegregations of the University of Mississippi and the University of Alabama.

To understand the tone the papers set, it is important to point out that Georgia was already primed for desegregation by the time of the 1961 integration of University of Georgia. First, black Americans were encouraged in the post-World War II era by their military service in that conflict and by the decolonization successes of nations in Africa, a message that perhaps also sunk in with white Americans who saw black enfranchisement becoming a reality, though one that was far away.

In Georgia, business and community leaders gradually discouraged segregation in society and the economy. During the pre-Vandiver Herman Talmadge administration, W.R. Bowdoin, the vice president of the Trust Company of Georgia, wrote that national companies with branches in Georgia were growing concerned about the educational levels of their workers, on which segregation had detrimental effects. Manchester, Georgia, banker and chairman of the

state board of education James S. Peters wrote to Roy T. Harris that desegregation of primary schools was inevitable and that closing them in response to the *Brown* decision was a futile stand that would have detrimental economic consequences for the state. The threat to the Georgia economy in closure of schools to resist *Brown* was also communicated by Mills B. Lane, Jr., the president of the Citizens and Southern Bank, who said each day schools were closed might cost the state economy one industrial plant. By 1960, the president of the Georgia Bar Association officially stated his opposition to segregation laws and called for their repeal. Following the 1960 fall meeting of the Georgia Baptist Convention, the members passed a resolution against closing primary schools.

As the sit-in movement began to gather steam and an Atlanta black elementary school was bombed in retaliation, the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce began a drive to organize businesses against school closures.³¹⁶ *Atlanta Constitution* editor Ralph McGill also ramped up his progressive rhetoric in his frequent editorial commentary on the irrationality of segregation. By being willing to openly state his progressive views in the state's paper of record, McGill helped to give legitimacy to public debate of the issue, particularly to white Christians who were cowed into silence by ardent white supremacists in the community.³¹⁷

Researcher's findings on Georgia newspaper content

The Atlanta Constitution was one of two newspapers of record in the state of Georgia in 1961, published daily Monday through Saturday and combined with *The Atlanta Journal* in the joint *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Sunday edition. In 1961, the circulation of *The Constitution* was listed as 199,282 with an "Independent-Democratic" political affiliation (see Appendix C,

³¹⁶ Grant, p.380.

³¹⁷ Ibid, p.388.

p.145). Though its primary market was Atlanta's population of 501,400 people³¹⁸, the newspaper was read throughout the state and its population of 3,943,000. Also of note are the distributions of Georgia's population along ethnic (71 percent white, 29 percent black) and municipal (46 percent urban, 54 percent rural) lines³¹⁹, lending some demographic support to Georgia's relatively urbane state at the time (see Appendix B, p.143).

The tone of coverage set by *The Constitution* in the month prior and up to the day after the desegregation of University of Georgia is suggestive of the increasing tolerance for the idea of desegregation in the state. Between the dates of December 11, 1960, and January 12, 1961 (thirty-two days) there were a total of eight issues with news content on the front page (25 percent of editions) related to the desegregation of University of Georgia. Within those eight editions with related content, there were a total of thirty-two news items (twenty-eight news stories, four photographs) on the front page. Of those twenty-eight news stories, all of them were neutral in tone and produced by *Constitution* staff or stringers, as opposed to being stories taken from the news wire (see Appendix D, p.148).

The stories all occurred between December 14, 1960, and January 12, 1961. The first news story on December 14 was neutral and highlighted the fact that other white female applicants had been accepted to University of Georgia after Charlayne Hunter was rejected on the grounds of female dormitories being already filled to capacity. The next front-page story occurred on December 16, and quantified at around 300 the number of white students accepted after Hunter and Holmes had been rejected. Subsequent stories highlighted the double standards the black applicants had to endure and outlined the machinations of the appeals, motions and injunctions in federal courts. Of the twenty-eight news stories analyzed, 100 percent were neutral

³¹⁸ Audit Bureau of Circulations, *Editor & Publisher* (Irvine, CA: Editor & Publisher Co, 1961), p.68.

³¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau (1960).

in tone. A front-page story on January 7th included the entirety of Judge Bootle's federal court order, demonstrating the newspaper's dedication to accurately informing the public of the intricacies of the desegregation. News coverage during this time also painted a picture of Vandiver being reluctant to withdraw university funds. Of interest, though not directly relevant, were news stories naming Vandiver as being a candidate for inclusion in the newly elected President John F. Kennedy administration. Photographs were split evenly between neutral and pro-desegregation, though they are more difficult to classify given that they leave room for interpretation by the researcher. For instance, on January 11, 1961, one photograph interpreted as neutral shows Governor Vandiver being served with court papers, while another, interpreted as being pro-desegregation shows a group of "mothers against integration" as being portrayed in a negative light. The other neutral photographs show students waiting on campus and Charlayne Hunter after her first class. It is worth noting that *The Constitution* did not feature any pictures of blacks in its pages during this time – the norm for mainstream newspapers in the South at the time – except for instances of the applicants and their legal team appearing on campus. The frequency of photographs of the black participants in the drama were relatively few compared to pictures of, for instance, James Meredith in the pages of *The Clarion Ledger* during his desegregation of the University of Mississippi. This might be explained in two ways: First, there were relatively few photo-worthy moments of high drama at which Hunter and Holmes were present during the University of Georgia desegregation, as both were based at other universities up until a few days before they integrated the university. The second explanation might be that the editors of the Jackson paper intended to show the enemy represented by James Meredith in his desegregation, which can be accounted for by the caustic tone of their coverage of the Ole Miss desegregation compared to the neutral-to-positive tone of *The Constitution's* coverage of

University of Georgia's desegregation. Aside from content related to desegregation, the paper also featured coverage of President-elect Kennedy and conjecture about his selections for key government posts, with foreign relations coverage chiefly devoted to Fidel Castro/Cuba, Nikita Khrushchev and "Red" China (see Appendix D, p.151).

While the news content of *The Constitution* was mostly neutral, analysis shows the editorial content – under the direction of integration proponent Ralph McGill – was firmly in favor of Hunter's and Holmes' successful desegregation. Of the thirty-two editions analyzed, eleven (34.4 percent) had occurrences of desegregation-related content, which included editorials, columns, letters and cartoons. During those eleven days with relevant content, twenty items were found – seven editorials, ten columns, two cartoons and one letter – of which eighteen (90 percent) were pro-desegregation and two (10 percent) were deemed of unclear intent. Every single occurrence of McGill's front-page editorials was in favor of desegregation, though they varied between staking the claim on legal ground and moral ground. On January 7, 1961, McGill wrote that litigation had run its course and that federal law superceded state law. On January 11, 1961, he wrote of "erasing the picture of the 'Ugly Southerner.'" McGill also praised Vandiver on the same day, saying he "didn't try to duck or dodge [federal law]." In his January 5th front-page editorial, McGill attempted to lend more legitimacy to desegregation for conservative readers by citing the tacit support for desegregation voiced by a Georgia Klu Klux Klan Grand Dragon who said it was inevitable. McGill also attempted to appeal to Christian values of acceptance in his January 12th front-page editorial, saying that the younger generation more accurately exemplifies Christian values than their elders. In the same column he also names two state senators as being on the right side (pro-desegregation) in the desegregation issue. Though it is not usually mentioned in the same breath as the desegregation of University of

Georgia, the editorial staff of *The Constitution* were cognizant of the possibility of federal intercession into the desegregation if the state government persisted in too much legal maneuvering. Though not directly related to the University of Georgia desegregation, the paper ran an editorial predicting federal intervention of Atlanta primary schools were not integrated. The editorial writers all agreed on desegregation and preferred that it be handled internally rather than involve the federal government because desegregation was inevitable. It is also worth noting that the tone of editorials in favor of desegregation did not view the governor as an adversary. In fact, McGill's January 11 editorial called Vandiver "brave." In the one occurrence of a related letter to the editor on December 15, 1960, a visitor to Georgia wrote in support of desegregation saying, "...there is a sadness in the Negro's eyes as he looks my way – and leaves this visitor ashamed." Both occurrences of editorial cartoons were unclear to the researcher, due to lack of context and a microfilm transfer that was illegible. Because there is no editorial content that is not in favor of desegregation, there are also no accusations of communist influence in the actions of the NAACP and the applicants, charges that would frequently be leveled in the two other university desegregations profiled in this study (see Appendix D, p.151).

The *Athens Banner-Herald* was the mainstream, Democratic-affiliated daily newspaper of Athens, serving its population of 33,500 with a circulation of 6,625 in six-times-weekly (except Saturday) editions (see Appendix C, p.145).³²⁰ Like the *Atlanta-Constitution*, The *Banner-Herald's* zeitgeist included conjecture that Governor Vandiver was a likely candidate for selection as Secretary of the Army for President-elect Kennedy's administration and foreign policy coverage chiefly concerned with communist rivals like Cuba, the USSR and China. Directly relating to the desegregation of University of Georgia, the period of analysis included the thirty-two-day period between December 11, 1960, and January 12, 1961, during which

³²⁰ Audit Bureau of Circulations (1961), p.68.

twenty-eight editions of *The Banner-Herald* were published. Of those twenty-eight editions, nine (32.14 percent) were found with front-page news content relating to the desegregation. Within those nine editions, twenty-three news stories were found, accounting for 100 percent of all news content. There were no photographs of Hunter and Holmes, nor any of demonstrators during the desegregation. All of the news stories were neutral in tone, with a mixture of locally produced stories by *Banner-Herald* staff and ones by Associated Press writers (see Appendix D, p.149).

The *Banner-Herald*'s in-house coverage was characterized by balance in the stories they wrote, attempting to allow for both sides of the debate's viewpoints to be communicated. It is perhaps notable that the paper referred to applicant Hunter as "Miss Hunter," demonstrating a level of respect for a black Georgian that was relatively recent in light of the Jim Crow-era's journalistic practices in reporting on black people. Front-page news on the desegregation was most consistent and was given the most space in the three days after Judge Bootle's decision and the ultimate success of the applicants to register for classes. The news relating to the intricacies of the court decisions was left to AP wire stories reproduced in the paper (see Appendix D, p.152).

The editorial stance of *The Banner-Herald* is more conservative than that of *The Constitution* and the strong influence of the latter's editor Ralph McGill. Only four instances (14.29 percent of editions) of editorial content concerning University of Georgia's desegregation were found in the twenty-eight editions analyzed, with one arguably pro-desegregation editorial, one editorial that was neutral and two that were unclear. The neutral December 18, 1960, editorial highlighted some of the difficulties faced by primary school desegregations in northern parts of the United States and asked for understanding of the difficulties being faced currently in the South, presumably meaning the University of Georgia. The one pro-desegregation editorial

on January 10, 1961, stated its stance on economic and procedural grounds. It stated that state's failed appeal to the Supreme Court was "the end of the line" and that admission of blacks to University of Georgia is "tolerable" because the damage that would be done to the state's economy by closing the university would be "intolerable." It also stated that, "Though we may dislike the course set for us, it is ours to follow." This demonstrates a problem faced throughout the study in that the tone is somewhat bitter, but, in the end, the item in question comes down on the side of desegregation on grounds that, though not morally rooted, are favorable toward desegregation in other ways. It is for this reason that this editorial and others later on were categorized in this manner. It is also worth pointing out that because Athens was a much smaller city than Atlanta, The *Banner-Herald* would have likely been more beholden to conservative local business owners who might have boycotted advertising in the paper if they felt the paper was too liberal in its editorial stances, therefore eliciting a measured response from the paper. Two other editorials on January 12, 1961, condemned rioters and charged instigation and irresponsible reporting by other news outlets, but their opinions on the desegregation were not clearly stated, thus were categorized as being unclear (see Appendix D, p.152).

The *Red & Black* was the campus newspaper of the University of Georgia, and was, at the time, not an independent publication as it is today. Exact figures for the enrollment at university in 1961 cannot be found, but have been roundly cited at around 7,000 in sources consulted in the course of this study. Likewise, efforts to discover the circulation of The *Red & Black* in 1961 have not yielded any figures, though it has been suggested by the former head of the University of Mississippi Student Media Center that a general rule is to publish a copy for each student plus an additional 10 percent for distribution in the community, putting the

circulation at around 7,700.³²¹ *The Red & Black* was published once weekly at the time, but the publication during the desegregation proceedings seems to have increased with special editions devoted to coverage.

A total of five relevant editions were analyzed during the period between December 11, 1960, and January 19, 1961. The latter date was included because it was the first edition published after the desegregation of the university. All issues (five) published during the one-month period preceding the desegregation included relevant content. A total of eleven news items were found, including eight stories and three photographs. All of the items in found were categorized as being neutral in tone. *Red & Black* staff produced all content. The first story on January 5, 1961, laid out Judge Bootle's ruling and pointed out that Vandiver's stance was dictated by state law. News on January 9th included a story about university administrators appealing for nonviolence and a story in which Hamilton Holmes' father was interviewed stating why Holmes wanted to attend the university. News on January 10th included a timeline of events and judgments to date, and a story on January 19th reported that 13 university students were suspended due to their roles in the riot at Hunter's dormitory. Photographs during the period showed students petitioning to keep the university funded and open and Hunter and Holmes appearing on campus (see Appendix D, p.150).

Editorial content occurred in all five editions published during the period of analysis. They included six editorials, two columns, two cartoons and seven letters to the editor for a total of seventeen editorial items. Of those seventeen items, five (29.41 percent) were pro-desegregation, none were anti-desegregation, ten (58.82 percent) were neutral and two (11.76 percent) were unclear. Like the other newspapers profiled in the University of Georgia desegregation, *The Red & Black* also seemed to support desegregation primarily on the grounds

³²¹ Ralph Braseth, e-mail to author, August 2, 2010.

of recognition of federal primacy. Only letters following the desegregation made any moral judgments about granting admission to black students. It might also stand to reason that the newspaper staff and faculty overseers were concerned about community backlash for expressions of moral support. The *Red & Black* was also notable for imploring students to conduct themselves peacefully during the desegregation, perhaps sensing the possibility of unrest more accurately than the two non-student papers. In an editorial on January 9, 1961, they wrote, "Let those in the position of leadership be the ones to handle this situation. Let's not try to take it into our own hands with violent actions." An editorial on the front page on January 11, 1961, condemned students who participated in the riot at Hunter's dorm, saying, "We hope you rabble-rousers who planned, organized and carried through this little exhibition last night are not truly representative of this campus." Two cartoons on January 10th were neutral and commented on state officials "dropping the ball" and on journalists inciting students to misbehave. A column on January 19th said, "We can pick up our broken pieces and carry on." Of the seven letters printed on that day, one was neutral, two were sarcastic to the point of being of unclear intent and four were in favor of desegregation. The neutral letter asked where student leaders were on the evening of the riot at Hunter's dorm, while the pro-desegregation letters addressed the hypocrisy of black citizens having such difficulties, one of which said, "Our nation preaches liberty, freedom and dignity of men all over the world (see Appendix D, p.153)."

Newspaper coverage of the desegregation of the University of Mississippi

At the time of the desegregation of the University of Mississippi in 1962, there were nineteen daily newspapers published in the state of Mississippi³²², with around one hundred weekly newspapers.³²³ The largest newspaper was the Jackson *Clarion-Ledger*, a morning

³²² Weill, p.81.

³²³ Roberts, p.277.

newspaper with a circulation of 52,396 for its weekday edition, and 88,530 for its Sunday edition (see Appendix C, p.145).³²⁴ The *Clarion-Ledger* was owned by the Hederman family, and its operations were overseen by manager Robert Hederman, Jr. and editor-in-chief Tom Hederman, Jr. The Hederman family also owned the *Jackson Daily News*, an afternoon paper, and monopolized the advertising market in Jackson, as evidenced by the unusually high profit rate of 18 percent for papers. Both newspapers set their advertising rates jointly and cowed into silence any businesses that dissented from the opinions of the ultraconservative, segregationist Hederman family. The Hedermans had a penchant for using the influence of their newspapers to proliferate not just news, but their own biases as well as to carry out grudges and lend favors. The Hedermans once attacked in the pages of the *Clarion-Ledger* a former Jackson mayor who had refused to help cut their taxes by lowering the assessment on a piece of family property. On another occasion, they buried the news of family friend's conviction of two murders deep within the paper instead of on the front page.³²⁵ Beyond simply granting favors to friends within the pages of their papers, the Hedermans also allowed third parties to manipulate their editorial policies. The *Clarion-Ledger* also regularly killed stories and published segregationist propaganda at the request of the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission. In turn, the Sovereignty Commission supplied *Clarion-Ledger* editor Tom Hederman with secret agency files.³²⁶

The links of the Hedermans and their newspapers to the state power structure did not stop at business matters or the occasional quid-pro-quo deal with the Sovereignty Commission. The Hedermans, as devout Baptists, held deaconships at the influential First Baptist Church in

³²⁴ Audit Bureau of Circulations, *Editor & Publisher* (Irvine, CA: Editor & Publisher Co., 1962), p.144.

³²⁵ "The Press: Revolt in Mississippi," *Time*, November 8, 1954,
<http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,857653,00.html>

³²⁶ Jerry Mitchell, "Jackson Papers were Tools of Spy Commission," *The Clarion-Ledger*, January 28, 1990, p.I-1.

Jackson, and were members on all manner of charitable and civic boards. They appeared to be more comfortable wielding their influence from behind the scenes, though. Tom Hederman claimed to have declined an offer to be appointed a U.S. Senator by Governor Paul Johnson, Sr., instead recommending James O. Eastland.³²⁷ During the tenure of Governor Ross Barnett, Robert Hederman said, “We Hedermans served as colonels on the staff of Governor Ross Barnett.”³²⁸

The content of the *Clarion-Ledger* during the time of James Meredith’s desegregation of the University of Mississippi was aimed at maintaining white dominance of what James Silver termed the “closed society.”³²⁹ That was accomplished by segregating the newspaper in the same way Southern society was segregated. Occasions for celebration that were regularly given coverage for white people rarely received any space in the *Clarion-Ledger*, or any Mississippi paper for that matter. Black marriages and births went unannounced. Coverage of black news in white newspapers was usually given over only to stories that involved crimes. Criminality was the usual context for a photograph of a black person appearing in a newspaper; other instances were rare.³³⁰ Like many Southern newspapers, the *Clarion-Ledger* had segregated news sections. Special “colored editions” were printed and distributed in black parts of Jackson.³³¹ The *Clarion-Ledger* also always identified blacks with the descriptor “negro.” Ira Harkey, the editor and publisher of the Pascagoula Chronicle-Star during the 1950s and ‘60s, raised hackles in the state when he unilaterally opted to, in order: drop the “colored” tag that appeared after the name of a black subject in an article³³²; capitalize the “n” in “Negro;” dropped the descriptor altogether

³²⁷ Robert M. Hederman, Jr., *The Hederman Story: A Saga of the Printed Word in Mississippi* (New York: Newcomen Society in North America, 1966), p.18.

³²⁸ Ibid, p.22.

³²⁹ Davies (2001), p.85.

³³⁰ Weill, p.xi.

³³¹ Davies (2001), p.97.

³³² Weill, p.xi.

unless it was relevant to the story³³³; and refer to black women as “Mrs.” and their real names instead of the generic pseudonyms “Hattie Lewis” or “Minnie Jones” that were usually assigned.³³⁴ Unlike Harkey’s progressive attitude toward blacks, most Mississippi newspaper editors, following the lead of the Hedermans, worked to play down any black accomplishments and avoided printing content that would run counter to white notions of superiority.³³⁵

Southern dailies have condemned for their role in helping to preserve Jim Crow, and the *Clarion-Ledger*, in particular, has been blamed for inflaming the tense situation in Mississippi when Meredith integrated the university. Ira Harkey opined:

Daily newspapers were the most powerful force fostering retention of Jim Crow laws, which excluded the Negro from almost every good in public life. Using the newspapers, and being used by them, were the politicians, school leaders, lawyers and, incredibly, many churches. So closely did those four emulate the malevolent lead of the daily newspapers that it seems impossible to consider the five apart. Constant degradation of the Negro by these pervasive groups kept alive the public scorn for blacks, leading to unreasoned hatred.³³⁶

Newsweek’s point man in Oxford for the desegregation of the University of Mississippi, Karl Fleming, also felt the *Clarion-Ledger* was contributing to unrest with inflammatory editorials: “By [the *Clarion-Ledger*’s] insinuation, the paper as much as told Mississippi students to raise all the hell they wanted against Meredith, without fear of punishment.”³³⁷ It has also been pointed out that the *Clarion-Ledger*, at the very least, committed serious faux pas regarding

³³³ David R. Davies, *The Postwar Decline of American Newspapers, 1945-1965: The History of American Journalism* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), p.64.

³³⁴ Weill, p.xi.

³³⁵ Steven D. Classen, *Watching Jim Crow: The Struggles Over Mississippi TV, 1955-1969* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004). p.81.

³³⁶ Weill, p.xi.

³³⁷ Roberts, p.282.

coverage of the civil rights movement and Meredith's quest. For instance, the paper took to placing pro-Barnett editorials at the top of the front page.³³⁸ More likely, the *Clarion-Ledger* was guilty of serious breaches of journalistic integrity. It ascribed undue credit and free advertising to the White Citizens' Council.³³⁹ The Hedermans also allowed reporters and columnists to get personally involved in the mission to maintain segregation.³⁴⁰ When the *Clarion-Ledger's* city news editor, Gene Wirth, died of a heart attack in the middle of the Meredith affair, his obituary stated he had "spent many long and late hours conferring with the chief executive and other state officials," thus demonstrating collusion with officials who should have been objects of skepticism.³⁴¹ The unprofessional relationship of Wirth and the Barnett administration was further demonstrated when Barnett served as a pallbearer at Wirth's funeral.³⁴²

The *Clarion-Ledger's* editorial content was universally in favor of maintaining segregation at the university, but locally generated news was also biased against Meredith and the federal effort to see federal court orders upheld (see Appendix D, p.158-159). That is not to say, though, the Hedermans devoted many resources to covering the high-profile story. More often than not, the editors of the *Clarion-Ledger* demonstrated a callous laziness vis-à-vis the Meredith desegregation. The *Clarion-Ledger* relied upon wire services for its stories about the desegregation of the university, often crafting the headlines to suit the Hederman agenda. It had no staffers devoted to reporting on the unfolding legal decisions, no fact-checkers,³⁴³ nobody to clarify what the case meant for social change, instead of simply placing the case in the context of

³³⁸ Ibid, p.275.

³³⁹ Weill, p.82.

³⁴⁰ Roberts, p.272.

³⁴¹ Gregory C. Crofton, *Defending Segregation: Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission and the Press* ([Master's thesis], University of Mississippi, 2000), p.75.

³⁴² David R. David, "Mississippi Journalists, the Civil Rights Movement and the Closed Society" (1994), <http://ocean.otr.usm.edu/~w304644/missjourn.html>.

³⁴³ Roberts, p.275.

being a crisis right from the start.³⁴⁴ The *Clarion-Ledger* also never once interviewed Meredith in the twenty months between his initial suit and ultimate matriculation at the university.³⁴⁵ During the several days leading up to the desegregation of the University of Mississippi, neither one of the Hedermans' Jackson newspapers had any in-house coverage. The Jackson News got there only by the time the riot was out of control and would not go on campus, but the *Clarion-Ledger* sent no personnel at all.³⁴⁶ It was for these reasons the Columbia Journalism Review called the *Clarion-Ledger* and the Jackson Daily News "quite possibly the worst metropolitan newspapers in the United States."³⁴⁷

Most of Mississippi's other daily newspapers fell into line behind the two Hederman-owned Jackson newspapers. The editors of the newspapers in McComb, Columbus, Meridian, Greenwood and Clarksdale all voiced editorial support for Governor Barnett's attempt at interposition, whether or not they knew it was futile. Joseph Ellis, Jr., the editor of the *Clarksdale Press Register*, though, acknowledged the paradox of his support: "We know that a major disaster is impending," he wrote on September 26, 1962.³⁴⁸ The *Delta Times-Democrat* (Greenville) and the *Pascagoula Chronicle-Star* were the only two dailies in the state to advocate for integration, both with well-known, progressive editors, Hodding Carter II and Ira Harkey, respectively, at the helms.³⁴⁹

In contrast to Karl Fleming's statement that the *Clarion-Ledger* shoulders most of the blame for setting low expectations for integrity among the rest of the Mississippi press, other veteran journalists have reflected that the locus may lie elsewhere. Eugene Methvin, a former

³⁴⁴ Davies (2001), p.9.

³⁴⁵ Roberts, p.278.

³⁴⁶ Ibid, p.279.

³⁴⁷ Davies (2001), p.85.

³⁴⁸ Ibid, p.33.

³⁴⁹ Weill, p.89.

editor at *Reader's Digest*, said that the beat reporters saw themselves as “protectors of their community’s state of mind.” Others, though, point the finger at the editors of Southern newspapers. Ben Bagdikian, journalist and media critic, said that he and other reporters were scolded for being duped by “radicals” such as Martin Luther King, Jr. who, segregationist editors said, did not represent the contented black majority. *New York Post* reporter Ted Poston said young journalists who yearned to print the truth were spurned by editors who were beholden to conservative advertisers and rural white subscribers who wanted to maintain segregation.³⁵⁰ According to the 1960 census, Mississippi was listed as having a population that was 93 percent rural and a black population that comprised 43 percent of the total (see Appendix B, p.143).³⁵¹

Researcher’s findings

The coverage of *Meredith v. Fair* varied greatly among the three newspapers – *The Clarion-Ledger*, *The Oxford Eagle* and *The Mississippian* – whose front-page and editorial content for one month prior to the University of Mississippi’s desegregation was examined. The content of the *Clarion-Ledger* was, at best, neutral in front-page news articles. The great majority of the *Clarion-Ledger*’s news content was generated by AP or UPI wire reporters, however. The headlines accompanying those stories were also sometimes contorted to make implications not present in the body of the story. Editorial content generated by the *Clarion-Ledger*’s editorial staff was universally opposed to the university’s desegregation. Editorial content in the form of letters to the editor from readers was nearly negative across the board, as well. Only two letters – out of a total of sixty-one pieces of editorial page content relating to Meredith over the course of thirty-one days – raised questions of Governor Barnett denying Meredith’s constitutionally guaranteed rights. The rest of the letters, like the editorials, either

³⁵⁰ Ibid, p.4.

³⁵¹ U.S. Census Bureau (1960).

praised Barnett, condemned the Kennedy administration for overstepping constitutional boundaries, called Meredith a troublemaker and/or cited inherent inferiorities of black character or intellect that precluded Meredith's legal and/or moral matriculation to the University of Mississippi. The editorials by *Clarion-Ledger* staff also made frequent use of "Kennedyism" as shorthand for federal action. However, the editorial staff were more vehemently anti-Communists than anti-federalists, and supported President Kennedy's maneuvers vis-à-vis the Cuban Missile Crisis, which was beginning to unfold around this time.

The *Clarion-Ledger* featured front-page coverage of the Meredith case on the first day of the survey period, September 1, 1962, a full month prior to the desegregation of the university. At the time of the first coverage, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black was still considering the request of Meredith's legal team to have the Fifth Circuit's injunction against the University of Mississippi upheld. The *Clarion-Ledger* was setting the agenda early and often compared to the *Atlanta Constitution*, which began consistent news coverage only about a week before the University of Georgia was desegregated. Between September 1, 1962, and October 2, 1962, the *Clarion-Ledger* had a total of ninety-nine pieces of news content on its front page. Eighty-seven of those were news stories, while fourteen were photographs. Twenty-three of the thirty-one days of the survey period found front-page news coverage, with the frequency increasing to near-daily on September 12, 1962, until the end of the survey period (see Appendix D, p.154-155).

The agenda-setting effort of the *Clarion-Ledger* can also be observed from its traditional Southern journalistic practice of using only white sources for quotes in its stories. The paper did not seek to portray any other perspectives besides that of the white power holders. The attempt of the *Clarion-Ledger* to conflate news and opinion was demonstrated by the frequent inclusion of City News Editor Gene Wirth's editorials on the front page of the paper. Contrasted with the

front-page editorials of Ralph McGill in the *Atlanta Constitution* that explained in legal and cultural contexts the changes that were going on, Wirth's editorials were inflammatory and did not seek to inform the readership of the finer points of the court battle. Wirth's editorials were also not as clearly demarcated as McGill's were, thus using to its advantage the indiscretion with which many readers differentiate "news" and "opinion." It is likely the *Clarion-Ledger* would have continued with the questionable practice had Wirth not died of a heart attack before the desegregation of the university was settled. The newspaper also violated some journalistic best-practices by sourcing the entire basis of stories from just one person. On October 1, 1962, one front-page article written by Charles Hill used unattributed, anti-desegregationist quotes from Lieutenant Governor Paul B. Johnson to promote the view that Governor Barnett had been stripped of his constitutional powers by federal activity. The next day, measuring the aftermath of the riot, a report with the headline "Marshals Set Off Ole Miss Rioting" presented an unbalanced account of the unrest sourced only from Sen. James O. Eastland. Eastland repeated the common refrain that 15,000 federal troops were in Oxford, while only 6,000 were in West Berlin (see Appendix D, p.154-155).

Photographic coverage of Meredith's case and the presence of federal personnel on the campus of the University of Mississippi was mostly negative in nature. There is a necessary leap that must be made in the researcher's coding of photographic content, for the photograph documents only a moment in time. It does not clearly evoke the sentiments of the photographer, nor of the editors who make the choice about if and where to publish a photograph. But it is the contention of the researcher that inferences can be made about the desires of a segregationist-era editor in his publication of a photograph pertaining to a court battle, campus occupation or other desegregation-related imagery. The editors of the *Clarion-Ledger* were clearly quite willing to

engage in non-standard practices of colluding with members of the state government to influence the executions of federal court orders in *Meredith v. Fair*. The agenda of the editors was also clearly demonstrated by the overwhelmingly negative editorial content devoted to the case, as well as the lack of in-house resources devoted to adequately reporting the case. It is, therefore, not a stretch to conclude that the editors of the *Clarion-Ledger* would seek to use photographs to portray those on the side of desegregation of the University of Mississippi in a negative light. The *Clarion-Ledger* published fourteen photographs relating to the desegregation of the university during the 31-edition survey period. Thirty-five percent of the photographs were coded as portraying desegregation in a negative light. These photographs showed Governor Barnett in a positive light, showed black reporters being denied press credentials and showed protestors against Meredith/the federal government. Most photographs were classified as neutral, generally showing crowds on campus or Meredith and his counsel leaving a courthouse. It is worth noting again that the *Clarion-Ledger* did not devote many resources to covering the case (see Appendix D, p.154-155). On the night of the riot on the university campus, the paper had no photographers or reporters present, leaving coverage to wire services. Therefore, neutral coverage via photographs might have been increased because the wire photographers did not have the same agenda as the editors of the *Clarion-Ledger*.

The *Oxford Eagle*, the weekly newspaper of Oxford, Miss., the location of the University of Mississippi, apparently stooped low to get under the bar set by the *Clarion-Ledger* in its coverage, as Karl Flemming of *Time* alluded to. Coverage of the desegregation of the university was scant during the five editions published during the month prior to desegregation. Of the six front-page news items that appeared, five were neutral. One was a message from the mayor of Oxford on September 27, 1962, that praised the restraint that people had shown thus far. A front-

page bulletin on the same day, however, was judged to express anti-desegregationist sentiment. Other stories and photographs that were published on October 4, 1962 – the first post-integration edition – were also neutral in tone (see Appendix D, p.156). They soberly documented the fact that Meredith had integrated the university. Most other news at this time was dedicated to the return of students for the fall semester and to a new Southern Bell station in town. The results in the editorial section of the *Oxford Eagle* were split evenly between anti-desegregationist and unclear intentions. On September 6, 1962, there was an editorial cartoon that depicted a looming desegregation fight, though it was unclear to the researcher what particular commentary it sought to make. An unclear letter on September 20 made mention that a large federal government was necessary for a growing country, but other points in the letter obscured the intent. The *Oxford Eagle* also featured columns written by one “Great Yick” during this time. Yick came down firmly on the side of segregation in his columns, expressing that he felt culls of the “mongrels” would be necessary if integration happened in a September 27 column. A letter on the same day was unclear. It referred to the campus newspaper of the University of Mississippi, *The Mississippian*, as being a “beacon of liberalism.” It is unclear if “liberalism” is a pejorative in this context. Editor and publisher Nina Goolsby also expressed her opposition to integration of the university. In an October 4 editorial, she wrote, “...like thieves in the night, [the federal government] violated the Constitution (see Appendix D, p.160).

The Mississippian, the daily on-campus newspaper of the University of Mississippi, featured very consistent, in-house news coverage of the Meredith case beginning on September 18, 1962. Prior to that, there were several wire stories over a three-month period that reported on the case. Coverage became consistent after Governor Barnett’s September 13 “genocide” speech. Contrasted with the front-page news coverage of the *Clarion-Ledger*, *The Mississippian* was

remarkably neutral. In fact, all twenty-three of the news stories and photographs during the survey period were judged to be neutral (see Appendix D, p.157). In the context of a Jim Crow-era Mississippi whose media was dominated by and whose agenda was set by the regrettably negligent *Clarion-Ledger*, the students who produced *The Mississippian* seemed to be able to resist the temptation to submit to prejudicial notions. That could be chalked up to youthful rebelliousness, as well – it is not possible to know the motivations from content analysis alone. Editorial content was mixed. There were only six instances of editorial page content that was related to the desegregation. Prior to the survey period, it is worth noting that there were several letters to the editor that expressed progressive sentiment. It was unusual for anyone to take the relative risk to submit a letter to a public forum that affirmed the humanity of blacks, but it occurred as early as mid-March 1962. Editorials during the actual survey period occurred twice on the front page. Both times were the editor-in-chief, Sidna Brower, making remarks aimed at addressing the escalating situation, beginning on September 21, and then again the next day. In the first, Brower congratulated the student body on the restraint they had so far shown. On the next day, she criticized other newspapers for spreading misinformation. Both were classified as being neutral in tone. Two letters were published during the survey period. One urged Mississippians to stand up to the federal government, but another unclear letter on September 26 anticipated violence, though it did not appear to condone violence. The final editorial in *The Mississippian* came on October 1. In it, the paper staff came down firmly on the side of desegregation, stating: “The federal government is once again showing its strength and power to uphold the laws of our country (see Appendix D, p.161).

Newspaper coverage of the desegregation of the University of Alabama

The *Birmingham News*, the largest and most influential newspaper in the state of Alabama, was founded in 1888 by Rufus Rhodes and purchased in 1910 by Victor Hanson, a veteran newspaperman, and Frank Glass, a former Hanson colleague from another newspaper. Early in Hanson's tenure as publisher, the *Birmingham News* gained a reputation for integrity in the face of special financial interests who wanted stories killed. Hanson once risked bankruptcy to print a story that a bank that had financed the paper wanted killed. The Hanson family and the *Birmingham News* profited in the same market where several other newspapers failed.³⁵² In 1955, the Hansons sold the newspaper to the S.I. Newhouse publishing empire, but Clarence B. Hanson, the nephew of Victor Hanson, remained as publisher and the paper continued to have an independent voice.³⁵³

The *Birmingham News* set a forward-looking tone in the state of Alabama in 1954 when it editorially supported the spirit of the *Brown v. Board of Education* U.S. Supreme Court ruling by calling for the voluntary gradual desegregation of schools supervised by the state rather than rely on the federal government to drive them.³⁵⁴ Clarence Hanson, in a 1967 address to a civic group, remarked that the *Birmingham News* had a conservative outlook, but which did not conflict with their mission to inform their readership of the inevitability of a changing country and racial landscape. "Because of our constitutionally guaranteed right to publish, we are sternly obligated to supply essential information to our people."³⁵⁵

³⁵² Delores A. Hobbs, *The Birmingham News*, <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1388> (2010, July 23).

³⁵³ Bob Carlton, "Editor's dream now a 118-year-old reality," *The Birmingham News*, August 13, 2006, <http://www.al.com/birminghamnews/future/stories/index.ssf?bnarr.html>.

³⁵⁴ <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1388>.

³⁵⁵ Clarence B. Hanson, Jr., *The Story of the Birmingham News – A Good Newspaper* (New York: Newcomen Society in North America, 1967), p.20.

During the time surrounding the desegregation of the University of Alabama in 1963, the city of Birmingham was experiencing great social upheaval due to demonstrations by blacks in defiance of Jim Crow segregation that were met with forceful responses by public authorities. To date, most discussions of the role of the *Birmingham News* during 1963 have focused on the unrest in Birmingham versus the contributions to law and order the paper likely made in the events an hour away in Tuscaloosa. In 1988, the *Birmingham News* published an admission in its pages of having made mistakes during its coverage of race relations in the 1960s. Former employees admit that the paper did not live up to its mission to provide the truth to its readers because conflicting interests it had with wanting to continue to stay in the good graces of city leaders, as well as the editors' hesitance to inflame the situation with coverage of injustices being done to blacks.³⁵⁶

The *Tuscaloosa News* also set a tone of acceptance and progress during the 1963 desegregation. Editor Buford Boone was a prominent member of the Tuscaloosa community, and interjected himself into narrative, albeit behind the scenes. Boone and other civic leaders met on several occasions – in ever increasing numbers each time – to question what desegregation meant to Tuscaloosa and to the state. Each time, they realized the inevitability of integration, and reached the conclusion that they must wield their influence to maintain peace and order. At the very least, they chose to side with integration for reasons of commerce – riots would cost money rather than generate it. Damage to buildings and cars would be costly, but damage done to Alabama's image would be even costlier. Boone, on the other hand, seemed to believe the desegregation was righteous from all points of view, including as a civil right. Boone's

³⁵⁶ Barbara G. Friedman and John D. Richardson, "A National Disgrace: Newspaper Coverage of the 1963 Birmingham Campaign and Beyond," *Journalism History*, Vol. 33, Issue 4., (2008), p.225.

participation was in line with the social responsibility theory of the press, and likely contributed in some way to keeping order.

Other newspapers around the state contributed to the general consensus that violence was impermissible. It was not just a public posture, as seemed to be the case in Mississippi in 1962. While many Mississippi newspapers officially stated that they hoped people would stay away from Oxford, their support for Governor Barnett's interposition showed they were spoiling for a fight, or at least for a spectacle. What nobody seemed to expect was the level of violence that was achieved without consistent leadership from Barnett. In Alabama, the editors had the benefit of seeing what happened when a governor – whose ego was inflated by popular support – tried to defy the federal government.

The appeals of Alabama editors in 1963, then, seemed more authentic than the cursory calls for order in Mississippi in 1963. The *Florence Times* of Florence, Alabama, began to criticize Governor George Wallace's stance in early 1963. It said it was Wallace's duty as a Christian to avoid violence. It called on influential people in the state to put pressure on Wallace to change his mind. The paper also said blacks deserved equal treatment. The *Tuscaloosa News* reprinted the editorial along with Alabama attorney general and Wallace arch-rival John Patterson's criticism of other public officials who supported Wallace's unconstitutional stance. President Kennedy met with a number of Alabama newspaper editors and executives on May 14, 1963, to let them know he did indeed intend to repeat his actions in Mississippi and send in federal troops if it proved necessary. As Wallace continued to voice his intent to make a stand on June 11, the newspapers turned against him. The *Tuscaloosa News* praised the university board of trustees for voting to admit the applicants and obeying court orders. The paper also implored Wallace to act with dignity. The *Tuscaloosa News* and other newspapers around the state began

to instruct people to stay away from Tuscaloosa and the University of Alabama campus as the day of desegregation drew nearer.³⁵⁷

Researcher's findings

Relating to the desegregation, 98 percent of the *Birmingham News*' front-page coverage during the month-long survey period was neutral. Stories were well balanced and had no apparent agenda other than establishing facts. Front-page news content appeared in 19 editions of 31 editions survey (61.3 percent). The majority of that content came in the form of news stories produced by *Birmingham News* staff. The news content is remarkable only in its neutrality and balance in comparison to the coverage of Jackson's *Clarion-Ledger*. The *Birmingham News*' circulation as of 1961 was 187,000, more than three times as large as the *Clarion-Ledger*'s.³⁵⁸ More readers in Birmingham and around the state would have seen the newspaper, thus been better informed by its balanced coverage than the inflammatory coverage of the *Clarion-Ledger* in Jackson in the year prior. The front-page coverage of the *Birmingham News* began on May 21, 1963, and outlined in neutral language the progression of event leading up to desegregation on June 11, 1963. Only one edition, on May 25, was judged to have shown overtly pro-desegregation sentiment when it portrayed Governor Wallace as being a militant, ex-Golden Gloves boxer who was not prepared to rationally handle the situation (see Appendix D, p.162-163).

Editorial coverage of the *Birmingham News* was more mixed. Of fifty-two pieces of editorial content, 32.7 percent was judged to be pro-desegregation, while 34.6 percent was anti-desegregation in tone. Most of the columns and editorials produced by *Birmingham News* staff were pro-desegregation. The newspaper did run a variety of editorials from other newspapers

³⁵⁷ Blasi, p.64.

³⁵⁸ Audit Bureau of Circulations, *Editor & Publisher* (Irvine, CA: Editor & Publisher Co, 1963), p.17.

around the state, some of which were not in favor of desegregation. Most of the letters published were anti-desegregation. The writers typically accused the federal government of overstepping its constitutional boundaries. One writer on June 11, 1963, referred to the black populace as “our colored people,” implying ownership. Another writer on the same day referred to blacks who supported President Kennedy as “Massa Jack’s darkies.” The *Birmingham News* gave equal voice to its readership to dissent from its generally progressive views of the inevitability of the desegregation of the University of Alabama (see Appendix D, p.167-168).

Like the *Birmingham News*, the *Tuscaloosa News* was also nearly entirely neutral in its front-page reporting on the unfolding desegregation. Unlike the other newspaper, the Tuscaloosa paper made frequent use of Associated Press content. As a paper with a circulation of around 20,000, the *Tuscaloosa News* would have had fewer resources for sending staff to Montgomery or Birmingham to cover Wallace and his administration. Of eighty-two pieces of front-page news content surveyed, 97.5 percent were judged to be neutral. Both instances of pro-desegregation news content were found in AP stories. One AP story on May 24, 1963, referred to “diminutive Governor Wallace...last of the Southern state chieftains to defy the federal government.” The other pro-desegregation AP story on June 5 said Judge Lynne’s injunction on Wallace to prevent him from blocking the applicants’ registration “spelled out federal supremacy and swept away any vestige of validity in the state sovereignty power claimed by Wallace.” Beginning on June 8, the *Tuscaloosa News*’ front-page reporting was done by in-house staff, and objectively reported on the unfolding details of the preparations for desegregation, including Wallace’s admonitions for people to stay away from Tuscaloosa (see Appendix D, p.164-165).

Editorial coverage in the *Tuscaloosa News* was evenly split between pro-desegregation and anti-desegregation content at 40.9 percent each. The number of letters and editorials were

nearly the same – nine and ten, respectively – with all the letters being anti-desegregation, and most editorials being pro-desegregation in tone. The *Tuscaloosa News*' editorials and columns asked the readership to recognize the inevitability of the university's desegregation and asked people to stay away from campus. The only anti-desegregation column that was published was a June 5, 1963, reprint from the *Northwest Alabamian* newspaper, which mentioned "invaders" from the "federal juggernaut." The letters, like in other newspapers profiled in this study, usually accused the federal government of overstepping its authority. One letter on May 29 opined that the Communist party was behind the desegregation. Another letter on May 31 likewise said, "Khrushchev and Castro are at the helm of this movement (see Appendix D, p.169-170).

The *Crimson White*, the student newspaper of the University of Alabama featured scant coverage of the desegregation. The researcher was unable to ascertain the frequency with which the newspaper was printed at the time in 1963. The desegregation took place during a summer term, thus the *Crimson White* may have been following a printing schedule that differed from the regular school year. The library of the University of Alabama had three editions on file that fell during the one-month survey period and made photocopies available to the researcher. All three editions, running between May 16, 1963, and June 13, 1963 (the first edition post-desegregation) featured news and editorial content related to the desegregation. Of fifteen pieces of front-page news content in the *Crimson White*, fourteen (93 percent) were classified as being neutral in tone. The other was judged to be pro-desegregation. The student newspaper reported mostly on university preparations being made for desegregation. The eight pieces of editorial content were evenly split between pro-desegregation and neutrality (see Appendix D, p.166). Editorials implored students to accept the reality of desegregation. In an editorial on June 9, 1963, the staff of the *Crimson White* came out and said, "We are in favor of desegregation on moral grounds."

As with other student newspapers, the staff of the *Crimson White* likely felt greater immunity in stating support for reasons of morality versus commerce or constitutionality. Letters were mixed. An anti-desegregation letter on June 13 accused the newspaper staff of “favor[ing] integration with a race of savages.” Another letter called the black students “misguided Negroes.” The writer of a letter on May 16, however, mirrored the sentiment the *Crimson White* would disclose several days later. The writer asked, “Is there really any difference [between blacks and whites]? You tell me if it hurts to hate just as much as it hurts to be hated (see Appendix D, p.171).”

CHAPTER FIVE - CONCLUSIONS

The researcher has shown the agenda-setting theory of the media to be an appropriate lens through which to examine the desegregation of southern universities. Agenda-setting theory has provided a framework for the researcher to investigate whether or not newspapers made a contribution to the manner in which desegregations were carried out. The newspapers profiled, in the month prior to the dates of desegregation, had a powerful potential for influencing the opinions of readers. They could inform their readers of lawsuits, court rulings and preparations being made for the integration of black students into all-white universities. The newspapers could gradually and objectively inform their readers of how their long-established Jim Crow society would be changed. The editorial pages could act as public forums for both newspaper staff and the public to debate the merits or faults of desegregation and of the constitutionality of the federal government's actions. On the other hand, newspapers could also act as echo chambers of misinformation, or even disinformation. A newspaper might align itself too closely with a governor and find its objectivity compromised. It could also purposefully choose to set an agenda of resistance to desegregation and tacitly permit the readers to believe they could engage in civil disobedience or violence with impunity.

The three newspapers examined in Georgia and the three newspapers examined in Alabama were of the former type. These six newspapers – *The Atlanta Constitution*, *The Athens Banner-Herald*, *The Red & Black*, *The Birmingham News*, *The Tuscaloosa News* and *The Crimson White* – presented news related to their respective desegregations with balance and

objectivity. They sought out multiple opinions in news stories and refrained from presenting the black applicants to the universities as being pawns of the NAACP or communist sympathizers. On some occasions, the newspapers crept away from objectivity and came down on the side of desegregation in the name of constitutionality and justice. Historical analysis of the conditions of the desegregations of the University of Georgia and the University of Alabama has shown these papers did not report misinformation.

The editorial pages of the six newspapers also made available a reasonable forum to the readers of the papers. Editorial staff generally wrote in favor of desegregation, usually out of a sense of inevitability and that resistance would be futile. They implored their readers to adhere to law and order. But sometimes they braved backlash from conservative white readerships and expressed moral support for the black applicants and the righteousness of desegregation. Importantly, the editorial pages also left room for dissenting opinions. Letters to the editor in these six newspapers generally opposed desegregation. The staff allowed readers to sound off with pseudo-science and conspiracy theories about communist infiltration in the federal government. The editorial pages also featured occasional letters from readers who were sympathetic to the cause of desegregation. Accordingly, the desegregations of the University of Georgia and the University of Alabama could be boiled down to oversimplified summaries of their respective magnitudes: it only became a bit chaotic at the University of Georgia, and it was spontaneous, isolated and quickly dispersed. At the University of Alabama, there was no violence to speak of, though the atmosphere was tense.

The newspapers of Mississippi were a different story, however. *The Mississippian*, the student newspaper of the University of Mississippi would be more accurately categorized with the last group, for its news was balanced and editorials concerned with maintaining peace. *The*

Mississippian, however, was but a small student newspaper in the middle of a maelstrom of misinformation and disinformation disseminated by the *Clarion-Ledger*, the largest newspaper in the state. The *Clarion-Ledger*'s owners closely aligned themselves with Governor Ross Barnett. The Jackson paper was unyielding in its opposition to desegregation on all fronts. It was negligent in its coverage of such an important in-state event. Reporting was left to wire services such as AP and UPI. The editors in Jackson often matched neutral wire stories with inflammatory headlines. On the occasions when the *Clarion-Ledger* devoted resources to in-house reporting, the results were very often unbalanced. They extensively quoted anti-integrationist government sources without counterbalancing views from parties in favor of desegregation. The researcher coded only 63 percent of *Clarion-Ledger* front-page news stories during the survey period as being neutral. Most journalists would likely agree that proportion is far too low. Twenty-seven percent were anti-desegregation in tone. Again, nowhere near being objective.

The editorial pages of the *Clarion-Ledger* acted as little more than sounding boards for readers and staff alike to express white supremacist, anti-government views. Conspiracy theories about Kennedy administration collusion with communist entities were frequent. A full 95 percent of the editorial content was anti-desegregationist. It is not a stretch to imagine how the constant barrage of anti-segregationist sentiment spouting forth from the most influential newspaper in the Mississippi owned by one of the state's most influential families might set an agenda for resistance. Whatever the effect, it set a low bar for the rest of the newspapers in the state to aspire to. All but a few did. *The Mississippian* was one of only a few that exceeded the bad example set by the *Clarion-Ledger*. The *Oxford Eagle* was not. The provincial Oxford newspaper expressed proportionally as much vitriol in its few weekly pages as did the *Clarion-*

Ledger. Again, to oversimplify the magnitude of unrest during the desegregation of the University of Mississippi: the coverage in both the *Clarion-Ledger* and the *Oxford Eagle* was inflammatory and did not give high priority to communicating the facts, which correlated to a chaotic and lethal desegregation.

It cannot be said that the nine newspaper profiled – three in each state – set the agendas in their respective states alone. The biggest three – *The Atlanta Constitution*, *The Clarion-Ledger* and *The Birmingham News* – certainly held considerable sway in the media landscapes of their states. But other newspapers as well as other forms of media also contributed to the agendas in each state. In Mississippi, there were eighteen daily newspapers around the state in addition to the *Clarion-Ledger*. Weekly newspapers were even more numerous. The possible agenda-setting effects of radio and television news are beyond the scope of this study, but undoubtedly they contributed to the outcomes of desegregations in each state.

The key result of this study has been to demonstrate at the very least a simple correlative relationship between the coverage of the newspapers that were surveyed and the relative orderliness with which each university was desegregated. Agenda-setting effects were likely present in the newspapers' coverage of each desegregation, but cannot be conclusively proven. Agenda-setting effects are most clearly demonstrated by polling, which was not part of this study. The events all took place nearly fifty years prior to the study. Polling of an event so far in the past would be nearly impossible to accomplish, and there is no guarantee results would be valid. The desegregations, at least in Mississippi and Alabama, had such high profiles that it is likely anyone polled who was alive at the time would rank them of being of high salience, even if that were not the case at the time of desegregation. Conversely, because they took place almost fifty years ago, their salience may have faded in the minds of people who would have been

polled. Regardless of polling, a causal relationship would be hard to prove, even if opinions of a statistically significant sample of individuals had been recorded back in the 1960s. Polling data relating to the desegregations was unable to be found, except for one instance in which 30 percent of a sample of 676 University of Alabama students agreed that desegregation was “a step in the right direction to improve the quality of citizenship in the state.”³⁵⁹ This minority opinion still did not correlate to any unrest on that campus. If 30 percent is significant enough to predict a peaceful desegregation, then the proportion that represents a tipping point into unrest is still unknown. Absent a demonstration of a causal relationship, a correlative relationship is still valid.

The historical backgrounds of each desegregation are also useful for constructing a picture of the state of race relations and the commitment of the state and university executives to achieving orderly integrations. They provide what quantitative analysis alone cannot – the impressions of experts who have studied the period, as well as the input of journalists who witnessed the events. When Karl Fleming, a *Time* reporter, called the *Clarion-Ledger* of the Jim Crow era the worst newspaper in America, that is a valid qualitative analysis that the researcher cannot make. It provides contextual support for the researcher’s findings of comprehensively racist, anti-federal content in the *Clarion-Ledger*.

The researcher believes the findings of this research project have current and future applications for both journalists and historians. Content analysis of newspapers can yield valid insights into the zeitgeist of an era. More sophisticated analyses that take into account word frequency or amount of newsprint inches devoted to a subject could likewise yield correlative evidence. Precise calculations of those types could perhaps be used to reach a mathematic correlation on a scale of 0 to 1, rather than the simple qualitative correlation of this study. A near-future application the methodology employed in this study, paired with comprehensive

³⁵⁹ Blasi, p.75.

contemporary polling, might be able to positively correlate media coverage of the current Congressional budget debate with presidential election results, or with how members of Congress themselves are motivated to vote on bills. A more analogous application might be a study of some violent event relating to race or politics. The media presents the contemporary American political landscape as being highly polarized. In some future event with a long lead time – perhaps with federal judicial involvement – running up to a pivotal moment that has the potential for explosive resistance, the outcome could be analyzed with the same methodology as the desegregation of these southern universities.

It has been clearly demonstrated in other studies – and given further support in this study – that the media has an agenda-setting effect on public opinion. It can sometimes also contribute to setting the agenda for public action or passivity. With ever more forms of media creeping into the consciousness of the public via ever more conduits – television, Internet, mobile phones – demonstrating the agenda-setting effects of myriad media sources will be valuable for future researchers for understanding the motivations and actions of the public. For those casting an eye on the past, especially the American Civil Rights Movement, analyzing the content of media can help to understand why Jim Crow gradually gave way to a culture that places greater emphasis on diversity and social justice.

APPENDIX

Appendix A

How articles were coded

All content was analyzed and coded by a single coder, with five percent (twenty-eight) of the 543 newspaper articles being coded by an independent coder in order to establish intercoder reliability. An intercoder reliability rate of at least 90 percent was desired. The content presented for the independent coder consisted of at least one randomly selected sample article of front-page and editorial page content from each of the nine newspapers included in the study. In addition to these eighteen articles, ten more were randomly selected from all newspapers and both categories of content in order to reach the five percent threshold. The researcher considered it impractical to have an independent coder devote many hours to reading hundreds of newspaper articles to reach a conclusion that would likely be the same in most cases, thus five percent was chosen as a statistically significant portion of the survey sample in order to establish a rate of intercoder reliability. Such a seemingly small percentage was settled upon because the researcher did not seek to demonstrate statistical significance with his newspaper surveys, but to illustrate the way a given newspaper presented news and editorials during a particular moment in history. The independent coder was informed of the researcher's methodology and categorization of content. After demonstrating an understanding of the task, the independent coder proceeded to code content for the twenty-eight articles chosen for her. The results were a 100 percent rate of intercoder reliability.

Front-page news and editorial page content related to desegregation were divided into several categories. News content was organized into categories of "news" and "photographs." Editorial page content was organized into categories of "editorials," "columns," "cartoons," and "letters."

Each instance of desegregation-related content was classified as exhibiting an overall “tone” that was either “pro-desegregation,” “anti-desegregation,” “neutral” or “unclear.” Pro-desegregation articles contained language that was, on the whole, in favor of desegregating the university in question. It does not imply that the writer or columnist was in favor of desegregation exclusively on moral grounds, but that some reason – usually economic or constitutional – was given for the desegregation being the right course of action.

Conversely, a classification as being anti-desegregation in tone meant the writer or columnist gave some rationale for being in favor of segregation of the university in question. The usual reason for classifying a piece of content as being anti-segregationist was that the writer objected on grounds of the federal government or federal judiciary’s actions being unconstitutional. Also common were letters and columns that implied a communist conspiracy behind the application of blacks to white public universities. Content that referred to black people in disparaging terms was also classified as being anti-desegregationist in tone.

“Neutral” content generally presented more than one point of view. In the case of news content, it meant the article was written in a balanced, objective way. Multiple sources were usually cited and no specific agenda was obvious. The same goes for editorial content that was deemed neutral – it pondered the situation at hand, but did not come down on one side or the other.

Content that was coded as being “unclear” was the least common. It usually contained allusions to some person or event that was unfamiliar to the researcher, though it was obviously making some sort of commentary on the desegregation of a university. It most commonly occurred in editorial pages in letters to the editor.

Appendix B

1960 Census figures for Georgia, Mississippi and Alabama

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

- **Population of Georgia in 1960**

Total: 3,943,000

Urban: 1,814,000 = 46% (P.21, Geographic Distribution, 1960 Census)

Rural: 2,129,000 = 54%

White: 2,817,223 = 71% (P.31)

Black: 1,122,596 = 29% (Up from 1940 and 1950 censuses)

Other: 3,297 = <1%

Atlanta was 24th largest city (P.24)

- **Population of Mississippi in 1960**

Total: 2,178,000

Urban: 187,000 = 8.5% (P.21, Geographic Distribution, 1960 Census)

Rural: 1,991,000 = 91.5%

White: 1,257,540 = 58% (P.31)

Black: 915,743 = 42% (down from 1,074,578 in 1940)

Other: 4,852 = <1%

Jackson was 84th largest city (P.24)

- **Population of Alabama in 1960**

Total: 3,267,000

Urban: 1,488,000 = 45.5% (P.21, Geographic Distribution, 1960 Census)

Rural: 1,779,000 = 54.5%

White: 2,283,609 = 70% (P.31)

Black: 980,271 = 30% (down from 983,000 in 1940)

Other: 2,860 = <1%

Birmingham was 36th largest city (P.24)

(Total U.S. population at this time was 179,977,000)

Appendix C

Circulation and population figures from *Editor & Publisher International Yearbook*

- US totals for circulation of dailies (Sun – Mon, morning and evening) in 1961 (only year 1961-1963 for which compiled figures were found) was 60,283,114, both subscription and newsstand sales, as reported by the Audit Bureau of Circulations in *Editor & Publisher*.

Georgia 1961

- Atlanta population 1961 estimate: 501,400
Constitution (m): 199,282
Journal-Constitution (S): N/A
Affiliation: Independent-Democrat
Other: No particular restrictions on advertising that is not accepted. The Atlanta Journal is the evening paper and has higher circulation.
- Athens population 1961 estimate: 33,500
Banner-Herald (eS no Sat.): 6,625 (e); 7,779 (Sunday)
Affiliation: Democrat
Other: Advertising not accepted – Liquor.
- University of Georgia enrollment 1961: N/A
Red & White: N/A

Mississippi 1962

- Jackson population 1962 estimate: 148,033
Clarion-Ledger (m): 52,396
(S): 88,530
Affiliation: Democrat
Other: No alcohol ads
- Oxford 1962 estimate: N/A
Oxford Eagle (Th): 2,450
Affiliation: Democrat
- University of Mississippi enrollment 1962: N/A
Mississippian circulation: N/A

Alabama 1963

- Birmingham population 1963 estimate: 347,705
Birmingham News (eS): 187,020 (e); 220,313 (S)
Affiliation: Independent-Democrat
- Tuscaloosa 1963 estimate: 67,806
Tuscaloosa News (eS): 19,637 (e); 18,914 (S)
Affiliation: Independent-Democrat

- University of Alabama enrollment in 1963: N/A
Crimson White circulation: N/A

Appendix D

Content Analysis Results in Table Form (begins on following page)

Atlanta Constitution Front-Page News Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
12-14-1960 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Balanced <i>Atlanta Constitution</i> story: shows that white females had been accepted when Hunter was rejected
12-16-1960 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Balanced <i>Atlanta Constitution</i> story: 300 white students were accepted after Hunter and Holmes were denied
12-17-1960 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Balanced AC story: "double standards for whites"
01-07-1961 P.1	News: 4	0	0	4	0	Four AC stories, all balanced
01-09-1961 P.1	News: 3; Photo: 1	0	0	4	0	Three balanced stories; one neutral photo
01-10-1961 P.1	News: 6; Photo: 1	0	0	7	0	Neutral AC stories about desegregation, university closing, though one by Marion Gaines is dramatically worded; Neutral photo of students waiting around on campus
01-11-1961 P.1	News: 9; Photo: 1	2	0	8	0	Pro-desegregation photo: one shows anti-desegregation Mothers as foolish, other shows pro students; Rest are local neutral stories detailing machinations of court decisions; neutral photo of Vandiver being served
01-12-1961 P.1	News: 3; Photo: 1	0	0	4	0	Three <i>Atlanta Constitution</i> stories; Neutral photo of Charlayne Hunter after class
		2	0	30	0	Total front-page news items = 32
						6.25% = Pro-desegregation
						0.00% = Anti-desegregation
						93.75% = Neutral
						0.00% = Unclear
8 editions (of 30 surveyed) with front-page news content = 26.6%						
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
News	28	87.50%				
Photographs	4	12.50%				

Figure 1

Athens Banner-Herald Front-Page News Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
12-13-1960 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	ABH article: "the Negro" (doesn't seem to be a pejorative), "Miss Hunter"
12-16-1960 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	ABH article: balanced, both sides covered
12-18-1960 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	ABH article: balanced, both sides covered
12-30-1960 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral AP story
01-08-1961 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	ABH article: neutral
01-09-1961 P.1	News: 5	0	0	5	0	Four neutral AP stories; one neutral ABH story
01-10-1961 P.1	News: 5	0	0	4	1	Three neutral AP stories; one neutral ABH story; one unclear ABH story: "good-natured cheers (from rowdy student crowd directed toward Hunter and Holmes)"
01-11-1961 P.1	News: 4	0	0	4	0	Four ABH stories, all neutral in tone
01-12-1961 P.1	News: 5	0	0	5	0	One neutral AP story; Four neutral ABH stories
		0	0	23	1	<u>Total front-page news items = 24</u>
						0.0% = Pro-desegregation
						0.0% = Anti-desegregation
						95.8% = Neutral
						4.2% = Unclear

9 editions (of 28 surveyed) with front-page news content = 32.14%

<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
News	24	100.00%
Photographs	0	0.00%

Figure 2

Red & Black Front-Page News Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
01-05-1961 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral <i>Red & Black</i> article: "Bootle ruled that University officials had discriminated"
01-09-1961 P.1	News: 3; Photo: 3	0	0	6	0	Three neutral <i>Red & Black</i> stories: Bootle grants stay on conditions; Non-violence urged by Dean; Holmes' father interviewed.
01-10-1961 P.1	News: 3	0	0	3	0	Three neutral <i>RB</i> stories: 1,500 people spotted Holmes and Hunter on campus and Vandiver cuts state funds; Timeline of events; Holmes' effigy burned but campus officials quickly stopped it.
01-11-1961 P.1	The microfilm for this date was a duplicate of the 01-09-1961 edition. It is unknown if this edition was circulated twice on the original dates. (Not counted)					
01-19-1961 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral <i>RB</i> story: Thirteen students suspended in connection with demonstrations at the university
		0	0	11	0	<u>Total front-page news items = 11</u>
		0% = Pro-desegregation				
		0% = Anti-desegregation				
		100% = Neutral				
		0% = Unclear				
5 editions (of 10 surveyed) with front-page news content = 50%						
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
News	8	72.73%				
Photographs	3	27.27%				

Figure 3

Atlanta Constitution Editorial Page Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
12-15-1960 P.4	Letter: 1	1	0	0	0	"There is a sadness in the Negro's eyes as he looks my way - and leaves this visitor ashamed."
12-31-1960 P.4	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	Quotes GA constitution: "No doubt about the precedence of federal over state authority," "avoid a useless conflict between fed and state authority"
01-05-1961 P.1	Column: 1	1	0	0	0	"[Prominent Klansman] accepts the reality of the Supreme Court decision"
01-07-1961 P.1	Editorial: 1; Column: 1	2	0	0	0	McGill: "Reality [of need to desegregate];" Editorial title - "Georgia's Course Is To Obey the Law," "no law requiring segregation in university system," "Litigation has run its course," "federal law supercedes state law"
01-07-1961 P.4	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	"When in conflict, the federal law supersedes state law," "Georgia has no law requiring segregation in its university system."
01-10-1961 P.1	Column: 1	1	0	0	0	McGill: "It is dismaying...to have a student leader reveal the depths of his immaturity," "discounts the future," "[a governor like Mr. Fabus is an] expensive luxury"
01-10-1961 P.4	Editorial: 1; Column: 2	3	0	0	0	McGill: "Forced segregation is not legal;" Editorial: "We cannot abandon public education;" Syndicated Lippman colum: "Idiocy has defeated sense before"
01-11-1961 P.1	Column: 1	1	0	0	0	McGill: "erase the picture of the 'Ugly Southerner'"
01-11-1961 P.4	Editorial: 1; Column: 3; Cartoon: 1	4	0	0	1	McGill: "Vandiver didn't try to duck or dodge;" Editorial: "Judge's response legal;" Boswell colum: "outcome inevitable;" Martin column: letter to son at UGA; Cartoon: unclear
01-12-1961 P.1	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	McGill: "frantically prejudiced persons," "There now is left no ground on which falsehood can stand."
01-12-1961 P.4	Editorial: 1; Column: 1; Cartoon: 1	2	0	0	1	Editorial: "The sky has not fallen;" Column: "knuckleheads who threw rocks;" Cartoon: Unclear
		18	0	0	2	Total editorial items = 20

8 editions (of 30 surveyed) with editorial content = 26.6%

<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Editorials	7	35.00%
Columns	10	50.00%
Cartoons	2	2.00%
Letters	1	5.00%

0% = Anti-desegregation
0% = Neutral
10% = Unclear

Figure 4

Athens Banner-Herald Editorial Page Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
12-18-1960 P.4	Editorial: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral column
01-10-1961 P.4	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	"Admittance of even two Negroes...is tolerable; end of the line"
01-12-1961 P.1	Editorial: 1	0	0	0	1	Condemning bad acts of rioters, but opinion unclear
01-12-1961 P.4	Editorial: 1	0	0	0	1	Charges of instigation by other news outlets of irresponsible reporting
		1	0	1	2	Total editorial items = 4
						25% = Pro-desegregation
						0% = Anti-desegregation
						25% = Neutral
						50% = Unclear

4 editions (of 28 surveyed) with editorial content = 14.2%

<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Editorials	4	100%
Columns	0	0%
Cartoons	0	0%
Letters	0	0%

Figure 5

Red & Black Editorial Page Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro</u> <u>Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti</u> <u>Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
01-05-1961 P.4	Column: 1	1	0	0	0	"We should face facts," "Let's think and then face the situation square in the face and show the rest of the United States that we in Georgia are the true leaders of the new South."
01-09-1961 P.1	Editorial: 1	0	0	1	0	"Let those in the position of leadership be the ones to handle this situation. Let's not try to take it into our own hands with violent actions."
01-10-1961 P.1	Editorial: 1; Cartoon: 2	0	0	3	0	"Some few Yankee publications have imposed themselves upon our student body", "...preserving our reputation..."; Two neutral cartoons about the ball being dropped and journalists inciting student behavior.
01-11-1961 P.1	Editorial: 1	0	0	1	0	"We hope you rabble rousers who planned, organized and carried through this little exhibition last night are not truly representative of this campus."
01-19-1961 P.1	Editorial: 1	0	0	1	0	"[University officials are in better position] to determine who should be suspended or not than the state legislature."
01-19-1961 P.4	Editorial: 2; Column: 1; Letter: 7	4	0	4	2	Neutral editorials: "create total confusion"; "restraint and discretion were used"; Neut column: "we can pick up our broken pieces and carry on"; Pro-desegregation letters: "Our nation preaches liberty, freedom and dignity of men all over the world."; "quest for domestic unity and peace"; "challenge of Democracy"; "She was being led to safety away from you"; Neutral letter: "Where were the student leaders?"; Two unclear letters with what seems to be sarcasm.
		5	0	10	2	Total editorial items = 17
		29.4% = Pro-desegregation				
		0.00% = Anti-desegregation				
		58.8% = Neutral				
		11.7% = Unclear				
6 editions (of 10 surveyed) with editorial content = 60%						
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
Editorials	6	35.00%				
Columns	2	12.00%				
Cartoons	2	12.00%				
Letters	7	41.00%				

Figure 6

Clarion-Ledger Front-Page News Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
09-01-1962 P.1	News: 2	0	0	2	0	Two neutral AP stories
09-07-1962 P.1	News: 1	0	1	0	0	AP story used with negative headline against JFK: "...[We] are dedicated to a constitutional gov't...opposed to an all-powerful central gov't in [DC]."
09-12-1962 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral AP story
09-13-1962 P.1	News: 1	0	0	0	1	Unclear <i>Clarion-Ledger</i> story
09-14-1962 P.1	News: 1	0	1	0	0	Unbalanced <i>Clarion-Ledger</i> story- only segregationists shown
09-15-1962 P.1	News: 4	0	0	4	0	Multiple sides represented
09-16-1962 P.1	News: 1	0	0	0	1	Unclear
09-17-1962 P.1	News: 3	0	1	3	0	One story is almost solely an extended anti-desegregation quote of Lt. Gov. Johnson
09-18-1962 P.1	News: 2; Photo: 1	0	0	3	0	Neutral news; neutral photo
09-19-1962 P.1	News: 5	0	3	2	0	Three heavily biased reports by <i>CL</i> that extensively quote anti-desegregationists without balance; Two neutral AP stories
09-20-1962 P.1	News: 3	0	0	2	1	Unclear article written in first person - unclear intent; Two neutral AP stories
09-21-1962 P.1	News: 3	0	0	2	1	Neutral AP story; neutral <i>CL</i> story
09-22-1962 P.1	News: 4	0	0	4	0	Neutral wire stories
09-23-1962 P.1	News: 2	0	0	2	0	Two neutral wire stories
09-24-1962 P.1	News: 3	0	0	3	0	Two neutral UPI stories; one neutral <i>CL</i> story
09-25-1962 P.1	News: 4	0	1	3	0	Anti-desegregation <i>CL</i> article: "invading federal marshals...interference in admin of state laws." Two neutral AP stories; one neutral <i>CL</i> story
09-26-1962 P.1	News: 4; Photo: 1	0	3	2	0	Anti-desegregation <i>CL</i> article: "wrath of the federal judiciary"; "Meredith, grinning as he walked by" Photo: supportive of Barnett
09-27-1962 P.1	News: 7; Photo: 2	0	3	5	1	Anti-desegregation <i>CL</i> article: "'honor roll' of defenders of states' rights;" Two anti-desegregation photos show forces against Meredith; neutral AP and UPI stories
09-28-1962 P.1	News: 5; Photo: 1	0	3	2	1	Anti-desegregation <i>CL</i> article: "Meredith was batting 0 for 4;" unclear: "NAACP dictating to senators;" positive photo of Barnett; Neutral AP and UPI stories
09-29-1962 P.1	News: 6; Photo: 2	0	1	4	3	Anti-desegregation <i>CL</i> article: "upholding the sovereign rights of the state," "attack and violence on the part of federal troops;" Three neutral wire stories; One neutral <i>CL</i> story from DC bureau; One unclear account of Ole Miss by <i>CL</i>
09-30-1962 P.1	News: 8; Photo: 1	0	4	5	0	Anti-desegregation <i>CL</i> article: "federal invasion"; Two wire articles manipulated to be anti-desegregation via headlines; Five neutral AP stories; Anti-desegregation photo shows black newsman being denied credentials

Clarion-Ledger Front-Page News Content

10-01-1962 P.1	News: 9; Photo: 2	0	4	7	0	Anti-desegregation <i>CL</i> article: one presents anti-desegregation facts without attribution; one has only biased extensive anti-desegregation quotes from MS congressmen; one is verbatim statement from Barnett; other highlights distaste of Nat'l Guardsmen for duty. Four Neutral wire stories; Two neutral photos.
10-02-1962 P.1	News: 7; Photo: 4	0	3	8	0	Anti-desegregation <i>CL</i> article: unbalanced accounts of possible federal troop/marshal misconduct; Four neutral stories; Four neutral photos
		0	28	64	9	<u>Total front-page news items = 101</u>
23 editions (of 31 surveyed) with front-page news content = 74.2%						0.0% = Pro-desegregation
						27.7% = Anti-desegregation
						63.37% = Neutral
						8.9% = Unclear
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
News	87	86.14%				
Photographs	14	13.86%				

Figure 7

Oxford Eagle Front-Page News Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
09-27-1962 P.1	News: 2	0	1	1	0	Bulletin: seems anti-desegregation, unbalanced; Message from Oxford mayor praising restraint shown by residents
10-04-1962 P.1	News: 2; Photo: 2	0	0	4	0	Neutral <i>Oxford Eagle</i> story and bulletin; Photos seem neutral
		0	1	5	0	<u>Total front-page news items = 6</u>
						0.0% = Pro-desegregation
						16.67% = Anti-desegregation
						83.33% = Neutral
						0.00% = Unclear
2 editions (of 30 surveyed) with front-page news content = 26.6%						
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
News	4	66.70%				
Photographs	2	33.30%				

Figure 8

Mississippian Front-Page News Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
09-18-1962 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Wire story
09-21-1962 P.1	News: 1; Photo: 2	0	0	3	0	Mississippian story: balanced; Photos: no overt bias
09-25-1962 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Balanced
09-26-1962 P.1	News: 6	0	0	6	0	Two Mississippian stories; Three wire stories; One story verbatim text of Judge Mize's decision
09-27-1962 P.1	News: 1; Photo: 1	0	0	2	0	Balanced Mississippian story; Photo: no apparent bias
09-28-1962 P.1	News: 1; Photo: 2	0	0	3	0	Balanced Mississippian story; Two photos of sheriffs
10-01-1962 P.1	News: 2; Photo: 1	0	0	3	0	Balanced Mississippian story; Verbatim order from chancellor; Photo of marshals lined up
10-02-1962 P.1	News: 2; Photo: 2	0	0	4	0	Balanced stories; Photos without apparent bias
		0	0	23	0	Total front-page news items = 23
8 editions (of 22 surveyed) with front-page news content = 34.8%						0.0% = Pro-desegregation
						0.0% = Anti-desegregation
						100% = Neutral
						0.0% = Unclear
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
News	15	65.22%				
Photographs	8	34.78%				

Figure 9

Clarion-Ledger Editorial Page Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
09-03-1962 P.6	Column: 1	0	1	0	0	"national suicide and tyranny"
09-12-1962 P.8	Column: 1	0	1	0	0	"campus liberals"
09-14-1962 P.1	Editorial: 2	0	2	0	0	"federal attacks," "[Barnett] spoke courageously;" "a Negro" [Meredith]
09-15-1962 P.1	Editorial: 2	0	2	0	0	"[Barnett] rightly contends;" "[Barnett] fearless"
09-15-1962 P.8	Column: 1; Letter: 1	0	2	0	0	"federal encroachment;" "Mississippianians are proud of [Barnett]"
09-16-1962 P.1	Editorial: 1	0	1	0	0	"federal interference;" "racial integrity"
09-16-1962 P.2	Editorial: 2; Cartoon: 1	0	3	0	0	Editorials: "left-wing appeasement," "grab power under the name of brotherhood and tolerance," "racist murder anecdote;" "subvert the constitution;" Cartoon showing Barnett cutting off federal judge
09-16-1962 P.3	Editorial: 1	0	1	0	0	"usurpation," "rape of the Constitution," "[Barnett] had the courage," "[Barnett] will not retreat," "blood-seeking Kennedys," "federal encroachment"
09-17-1962 P.1	Editorial: 1	0	1	0	0	"federal encroachment," "outside interference"
09-17-1962 P.6	Column: 1	0	1	0	0	"Yankee philosophy"
09-19-1962 P.5	Column: 1	0	1	0	0	"[Barnett's] courageous stand," "will of the people"
09-19-1962 P.6	Column: 1; Letter: 3	0	4	0	0	Column: "radical oddballs;" "Kennedyism;" "African semi-savages"
09-20-1962 P.6	Column: 1	0	1	0	0	"Shanty Irish (Kennedys)," "Pretty soon the federal payroll will be altogether Kennedy and Colored"
09-21-1962 P.6	Column: 1	0	1	0	0	"big showdown," "[Meredith's] NAACP-federal friends"
09-22-1962 P.4	Column: 1; Letter: 1	0	2	0	0	"civil rights" (in quotations); "[JFK administration are] Fabian socialists"
09-23-1962 P.2	Cartoon: 1	0	1	0	0	Gavel shown driving "Integration" spike into Mississippi
09-24-1962 P.6	Column: 1; Letter: 4	1	4	0	0	Anti-desegregation column: "Yankees lack finesse, culture;" "decomposing the white race;" "power-hungry Kennedys;" Pro-desegregation letter: "deny liberty"
09-24-1962 P.8	Column: 1	0	1	0	0	<i>The CL</i> quotes other papers: "usurped;" "regulate its own affairs;" "preserve their heritage;" "favorite whipping boy (MS);" "[Barnett is] a man who believes in his principles" "power-hungry leaders in DC;" "so much has been done for the Negro at the expense of the whole populace"
09-25-1962 P.8	Column: 1; Letter: 3	1	3	0	0	Pro-desegregation letter: Fourteenth Amendment cited; Two Anti-desegregation letters: "[Barnett's] courageous attitude," "destroying the laws of the U.S. Constitution;" Anti-desegregation column: "Kennedyism," "political interference," "power-drunk federals"
09-26-1962 P.8	Column: 1; Letter: 1	0	2	0	0	Letters: "ruthless, Negro-worshipping Kennedys;" "big government"

Clarion-Ledger Editorial Page Content

09-27-1962 P.10	Column: 1; Letter 2	0	3	0	0	Column: "[Barnett's] courageous stand;" Letters: "Ethiopians (referring to African Americans);" "[Barnett is] No.1 defender of state rights"
09-28-1962 P.6	Editorial: 1; Column: 1	0	2	0	0	Editorial: "State is unified behind [Barnett]," "our Ross," "cheap efforts of the Kennedy crowd," "Communist threat;" Column: "brow-beaten by the Federal Gov't"
09-28-1962 P.8	Column: 1	0	1	0	0	"belligerent federal marshals," "Nobody was going past [Lt. Gov. Johnson]"
09-29-1962 P.6	Column: 2; Letter: 3	0	5	0	0	Columns: "Administration tactics against MS," "Kennedyism," "Ike's monumental stupidity;" "governmental pressure," "Keep MS Sovereign;" Letters: "dictatorial tyranny;" political intimidation;" "so-called professors come from the states in the North"
09-30-1962 P.6	Editorial: 1; Column: 1; Cartoon: 1	0	3	0	0	Editorial: "NAACP's pawn [Meredith]; Letter: "NAACP drive!;" Cartoon: shows Tenth Amendment in garbage
09-30-1962 P.7	Column: 1	0	1	0	0	"unfriendly federal gov't" "Mississippi cannot allow the unleashed furies of the Congo as are seen on the doorsteps of the U.S. Capitol," "Yankees," "skalawags are with us"
10-01-1962 P.8	Column: 2; Letter: 1	0	2	1	0	Neutral syndicated column; Anti-desegregation column: "Kennedy is a rebel-rouser;" Anti-desegregation letter: "wire Congress and demand constitutional government"
10-02-1962 P.6	Column: 1; Letter: 5	0	6	0	0	Column: "dictatorial President," "NAACP troublemakers;" Letters: "Socialists;" "direct violation of Constitution;" "[Barnett's] courageous stand"
		2	58	1	0	Total editorial items = 61

28 editions (of 31 surveyed) with editorial content = 90.32%

<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Editorials	11	18.03%
Columns	23	37.70%
Cartoons	3	4.90%
Letters	24	39.34%

3.3% = Pro-desegregation
95.1% = Anti-desegregation
1.6% = Neutral
0% = Unclear

Figure 10

Oxford Eagle Editorial Page Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
09-06-1962 P.4	Cartoon: 1	0	0	0	1	Cartoon of looming school desegregation fight - opinion unclear
09-20-1962 P.4	Column: 1; Letter: 1	0	1	0	1	Anti-desegregation: "scrap our constitution;" Unclear: links idea of big gov't as a necessity for a growing country
09-27-1962 P.4	Column: 2; Editorial: 1	0	1	0	2	Unclear column: " <i>The Mississippian</i> is often a beacon of liberalism;" Anti-desegregation column: "force integration," "mongrelized culls," "integration will be bad for our country"
10-04-1962 P.4	Column: 2	0	2	0	0	Anti-desegregation column: "rights...bulldozed away," "ignore the rights and wishes of all the people of a state," "weaken our country;" Anti-degregation column by Goolsby (editor and publisher): "like thieves in the night [the federal gov't], violated the Constitution"
		0	4	0	4	<u>Total editorial items = 8</u>
						0% = Pro-desegregation
						50% = Anti-desegregation
						0% = Neutral
						50% = Unclear
4 editions (of 5 surveyed) with editorial content = 80%						
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
Editorials	1	12.50%				
Columns	5	62.50%				
Cartoons	1	12.50%				
Letters	1	12.50%				

Figure 11

Mississippian Editorial Page Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
09-21-1962 P.1	Editorial: 1	0	0	1	0	Editorial by editor Brower only congratulates students on restraint shown
09-22-1962 P.1	Editorial: 1	0	0	1	0	Editorial by Brower is neutral, but criticizes other hypocritical papers
09-26-1962 P.1	Cartoon: 1	0	0	0	1	Poor-quality copy of cartoon on microfilm - intent unclear
09-26-1962 P.2	Letter: 2	0	1	0	1	Anti-desegregation letter: "If we can stand up to the Federal Gov't;" Neutral letter: seems to anticipate, but not condone, violence
10-01-1962 P.2	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	"The federal gov't is once again showing its strength and power to uphold the laws of our country."
		1	1	2	2	<u>Total editorial items = 6</u>
						16.7% = Pro-desegregation
						16.7% = Anti-desegregation
						33.3% = Neutral
						33.3% = Unclear
5 editions (of 22 surveyed) with editorial content = 9.1%						
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
Editorials	3	50.00%				
Columns	0	0.00%				
Cartoons	1	16.66%				
Letters	2	33.33%				

Figure 12

Birmingham News Front-Page News Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
05-21-1963 P. 1	News: 2	0	0	2	0	Two neutral stories, one of which is a <i>Birmingham News</i> story
05-22-1963 P.1	News: 2	0	0	2	0	Two neutral <i>Birmingham News</i> stories - one outlines steps to date in desegregation; other about why President Kennedy is sending troops
05-24-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral <i>BN</i> story about Robert Kennedy asking for injunction against Wallace's planned stand.
05-25-1963 P.1	News: 3	0	0	3	0	"Forthcoming crisis;" "showdown"
05-26-1963 P.1	News: 1	1	0	0	0	"ex-Golden Glover (Wallace)," "militant man (Wallace)," "arch enemy Robert Kennedy," "would cause violence"
05-27-1963 P.1	News: 2	0	0	2	0	Two neutral wire stories about Wallace dodging being served court papers and his Supreme Court appeal being dropped.
05-29-1963 P.1	News: 2	0	0	2	0	Two neutral <i>Birmingham News</i> stories - balanced, unbiased; "stir up mob violence"
05-30-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral <i>BN</i> story: "hide-and-seek game with federal government [about injunction]"
06-02-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral <i>BN</i> story: Lt. Gov. Allen: Alabama "must not travel the Oxford route."
06-03-1963 P.1	News: 4	0	0	4	0	Four neutral <i>BN</i> stories: "Wallace vows to stand;" "Department of Justice petitions to stop Wallace;" Wallace's TV appearance praised; University of Alabama accepts James Hood for admission at Tuscaloosa
06-04-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral <i>BN</i> story: Court ruling awaited on Wallace's planned stand.
06-05-1963 P.1	News: 3; Photo: 1	0	0	4	0	Three neutral <i>BN</i> stories: explain possibility of Wallace's arrest; Judge's rare "I" used in his written opinion; Wallace to be on TV; neutral photograph of Wallace and Judge Lynne
06-06-1963 P.1	News: 2; Photo: 1	0	0	3	0	Two neutral <i>BN</i> stories: "unreleting Governor;" "Federal government will bring in troops;" Photo of Wallace in TV studio
06-07-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Wallace says, "[Malone] is a pawn in the hands of the NAACP."
06-08-1963 P.1	News: 3	0	0	3	0	Three Neut BNs: US will avoid jailing Wallace; State troops line UA campus; Bull Connor urges people to stay away.
06-09-1963 P.1	News: 6; Photo: 1	0	0	7	0	Six neutral <i>BN</i> stories: Wallace asks for peace; story on U.S. marshal who will accompany Malone and Hood; Army readies; 825 police assembled by Wallace
06-10-1963 P.1	News: 5; Photo: 1	0	0	6	0	Five neutral <i>BN</i> stories: U.S. asks Wallace to stand aside; Wallace, police ask people to stay away; Alabama National Guard on standby; UA pres Rose wants Wallace there to ensure order.
06-11-1963 P.1	News: 4; Photo: 1	0	0	5	0	Four neutral <i>BN</i> stories: JFK proclamation for Wallace to cease and desist; text of Wallace's statement; Wallace turned away federal gov't; Federal gov't would shortly register blacks anyway.
06-12-1963 P.1	News: 1; Photo: 1	0	0	2	0	<i>BN</i> : Wallace pulls troops, blacks in class; photo of Alabama National Guard general.
		1	0	50	0	<u>Total front-page news items = 51</u>

2% = Pro-desegregation

0.0 = Anti-desegregation

98% = Neutral

19 editions (of 31 surveyed) with front-page news content = 61.3%

Birmingham News Front-Page News Content

<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	0% = Unclear
News	45	88.24%	
Photographs	6	11.76%	

Figure 13

Tuscaloosa News Front-Page News Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
05-20-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral AP story - summarization of legal issues
05-21-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	2	0	Two neutral AP stories - trustees agree to admit two blacks; Autherine Lucy was expelled unproven accusations against school officials. Both stories balanced
05-21-1963 P.1B	News: 3	0	0	3	0	Two neutral AP stories - details Judge Grooms' denial of trustees' motion of delay; neutral <i>Tuscaloosa News</i> story asking students about their reactions
05-22-1963 P.1	News: 2; Photo: 2	0	0	4	0	Two neutral AP stories - profile of Grooms and how there are fewer protests to him, implying a growing acceptance of desegregation; Attorney General Flowers says the fight is over; two neutral photographs
05-23-1963 P.1	News: 4; Photo: 1	0	0	5	0	Four neutral AP stories - President Kennedy considering new civil rights legislation; Wallace "testing" system; profile of Vivian Malone
05-24-1963 P.1	News: 1; Photo: 2	0	0	3	0	Neutral AP story - Federal gov't invoked its sovereignty; two neutral photos
05-25-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral AP story - Wallace has no comment on Justice Deptment proceedings against him
05-26-1963 P.1	News: 1	1	0	0	0	Biased AP story - "Diminutive Governor Wallace," "last of the Southern state chieftans to defy the federal government"
05-27-1963 P.1	News: 2	0	0	2	0	Two neutral AP stories: Wallace avoiding being served; Wallace suit to prevent federal troops in Birmingham rejected by Supreme Court
05-29-1963 P.1	News: 4	0	0	4	0	Three neutral <i>Tuscaloosa News</i> stories - business and community leaders urge restraint to Wallace; AP story - Alabama senators back Wallace
05-30-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral AP story - vote of confidence in Wallace by Senate
05-31-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	2	0	Two neutral <i>Tuscaloosa News</i> stories: one alerts public of campus safety, ID measures; second about KKK pledging to stay away, Grand Jury asking for people to avoid Tuscaloosa
06-01-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral AP story - Wallace: "I don't want you to stand with me. I am going to stand for you."
06-02-1963 P.1	News: 2	0	0	2	0	Two neutral AP stories : Lt. Gov. Allen: "Let's not travel the Oxford route."; "Businessmen...urged...Wallace to abandon his doorway defiance."
06-03-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Neutral AP story - Judge Lynne delayed immediate ruling on Wallace edict.
06-04-1963 P.1	News: 4	0	0	4	0	Four neutral AP stories: Hood accepted; Paper Workers union backs Wallace; Hood parents proud; Wallace and University of Alabama presidents Rose meet
06-05-1963 P.1	News: 3	1	0	2	0	One Pro-desegregation AP story: "...spelled out federal supremacy and swept away any vestige of validity in the state sovereignty power claimed by Wallace...[Lynne's] decision was a complete victory for the Justice Department."; Neutral <i>Tuscaloosa</i> story about roadblocks and IDs; Neutral AP story about Wallace going on statewide TV
06-06-1963 P.1	News: 2; Photo: 1	0	0	3	0	Neutral AP story: Wallace will risk arrest to make stand; Story detailing roadblocks at UA, accompanying map of roadblocks.
06-07-1963 P.1	News: 2	0	0	2	0	4,000 Alabama National Guardsmen; Highway Patrol task force has moved onto the UA campus
06-08-1963 P.1	News: 4; Photo: 1	0	0	5	0	Bull Connor says stay away, boycott; Roadblock details; Cabinet members give Wallace confidence vote; State Representative calls for law and order; Neutral photograph of roadblocks.

Tuscaloosa News Front-Page News Content

06-09-1963 P.1	News: 6; Photo: 3	0	0	9	0	All are <i>Tuscaloosa News</i> stories except AP story about U.S. Chamber of Commerce president supporting integration. Wallace urges avoidance of Tuscaloosa; 500 Alabama Guardsmen in Tuscaloosa; Tuscaloosa radio stations cooperate in coverage; KKK predicts boycotts; Six men arrested with weapons; 3 neutral photographss all related to security.
06-10-1963 P.1	News: 4; Photo: 2	0	0	6	0	Two <i>Tuscaloosa News</i> stories: 500 Guardsmen and arrests of 15 armed men; Air of calmness on campus; AP: Voice of America radio to report and broadcast behind Iron Curtain; Wallace says stay away again. Two photos of seized arsenal and troops.
06-11-1963 P.1	News: 5; Photo: 2	0	0	7	0	Wallace statement; JFK statement; students surprised Wallace followed through; Gen. Graham informs Wallace of his "sad duty"; quick registration of two students. Photos of troops and Deputy U.S. Attorney General Katzenbach.
06-11-1963 P.1	News: 4; Photo: 2	0	0	6	0	Wallace statement; JFK statement; JFK federalizes 17,000 Alabama National Guard personnel; 46 lawyers sign statement saying Wallace wrong to test. Two photogarpchs of stand at doorway.
06-12-1963 P.1	News: 3; Photo: 1	0	0	4	0	Three neutral <i>Tuscaloosa News</i> stories: "Both students...walked to their classes;" "...to begin their work as students at the University of Alabama;" "under civil, not military, control." Photograph of Malone being walked to class by two white female students
		2	0	80	0	<u>Total front-page news items = 82</u>
						2.5% = Pro-desegregation
						0.0% = Anti-desegregation
						97.5% = Neutral
						0.0% = Unclear
25 editions (of 31 surveyed) with front-page news content = 80.65%						
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
News	65	79.27%				
Photographs	17	20.73%				

Figure 14

Crimson White Front-Page News Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
05-16-1963 P.1	News: 1	0	0	1	0	Story of unknown provenance: balanced, without bias, about two black federal employees applying for Huntsville graduate school: "mathematician", "analyst"
06-09-1963 P.1	News: 3; Photo: 1; Letter: 1	1	0	4	0	Three Neutral <i>Crimson White</i> stories - all focus on security, curfews. Photograph of secured road into campus; Pro-desegregation letter from William Faulkner
06-13-1963 P.1	News: 3; Photos: 6	0	0	9	0	Two stories about curfews; Other explains happenings of the day, with Hood praising the preparations made for his and Malone's arrival. Six photos of Wallace, National Guard general, crowd at door, helicopter over University of Alabama campus providing security.
		1	0	14	0	<u>Total front-page news items = 15</u> 6.67% = Pro-desegregation 0.0% = Anti-desegregation 93.33% = Neutral 0.0% = Unclear
3 editions (of 3 surveyed) with front-page news content = 100%						
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
News	7	46.67%				
Photographs	7	46.67%				
Other	1	6.67%				

Figure 15

Birmingham News Editorial Page Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
05-22-1963 P.10	Editorial: 2	1	0	0	1	Pro-desegregation <i>Birmingham News</i> editorial: "It will reaffirm federal supremacy;" Other column unclear: Says Supreme Court is supreme, though expresses disdain for Kennedys.
05-25-1963 P.4	Editorial: 4; Cartoon: 1	1	2	0	1	Anti-desegregation editorials: "Federal juggernaut," "not many Negroes are brave or stupid enough to remain;" "we agree with the governor regarding race issues;" Pro-desegregation editorial: "change is inevitable;" Unclear editorial is about maintaining rule of law; Anti-desegregation cartoon showing a "Federal Gov't" train barreling down the tracks
05-26-1963 P.16	Column: 1	1	0	0	0	Lengthy transcript of SACS accreditation problems at Ole Miss with clear implications for the University of Alabama
05-27-1963 P.6	Editorial: 1; Column: 1	0	1	1	0	Neutral <i>Birmingham News</i> editorial: praises preparations of university leaders; Anti-desegregation wire column: A.G. Kennedy's Supreme Court brief "paves way for dictator"
05-28-1963 P.16	Column: 1	1	0	0	0	Pro-desegregation wire column: "current American predicament," "wisdom [of listening to the Supreme Court]"
05-30-1963 P.12	Editorial: 1; Column: 1; Letter: 1	2	1	0	0	Two pro-desegregation editorials: "[Wallace] presumably believes he has a mandate;" "[Wallace] imperiled peace;" Anti-desegregation letter: "[Federal court] shows disdain for the Constitution," "trouble-makers like [<i>The Birmingham News</i>]"
06-03-1963 P.16	Editorial: 1; Letter: 5	0	4	1	1	Neutral <i>BN</i> editorial: Explains accreditation; Four anti-desegregation letters: "a vote in favor of communism;" "far greater crime and rioting in [DC];" "a serious problem [President Kennedy has created];" "violate our social order;" Unclear letter: refers to something unknown by the researcher
06-04-1963 P.6	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	Pro-desegregation <i>BN</i> editorial: "It is not necessary for [Wallace] to appear personally on campus to [make his stand]."
06-05-1963 P.12	Editorial: 1	0	0	0	1	Unclear <i>BN</i> editorial: comments on Vice President Johnson's speech, but unclear what they felt.
06-06-1963 P.14	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	"[Lynne's] masterful legal summation," "supremacy of the federal judiciary," "[the stand] is against the U.S. and its judiciary," "dutiful Alabamians"
06-07-1963 P.8	Column: 1; Letter: 1	0	1	0	1	Unclear column: "Wallace exercising Constitutional right;" Anti-desegregation letter: "Our enemy is...the Communists who have used the Negro to further the Commie plan."
06-08-1963 P.6	Editorial: 11; Column: 1; Letter: 4	2	5	1	8	Mixture of editorials from around Alabama: Pro-desegregation: 2; Anti-desegregation: 2; Unclear: 7; Neutral column: explains what happens if Wallace is arrested; Three anti-desegregation letters: accuses <i>BN</i> of being anti-Wallace; "liberal educators;" "King John," "moral decay;" One unclear letter.
06-09-1963 P.16	Editorial: 1; Cartoon: 1	2	0	0	0	Pro-desegregation editorial: "[University of Alabama Trustees] applied fine intellect, respect for law;" Pro-desegregation cartoon depicts ruin of mob violence.
06-10-1963 P.14	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	Pro-desegregation <i>Wall Street Journal</i> editorial: "[Wallace] spoke feelingly of states' rights, not of states' responsibilities."

Birmingham News Editorial Page Content

06-11-1963 P.16	Editorial: 1; Letter: 4	2	3	0	0	Pro-desegregation editorial: "Are we indefinitely forever to have large numbers of Southerners believing that federal rulings are 'unconstitutional'?" "rulings are...thoughtful and sincere;" Anti-desegregation letters: "our colored people;" "usurpation of its rights;" "Massa Jack's darkies;" "military dictatorship;" Pro-desegregation letter: "risking peace and order at the university's door"
06-12-1963 P.1	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	"[Wallace's] disrespect for federal court"
06-12-1963 P.12	Editorial: 2	1	0	0	1	Pro-desegregation column: "The confrontation has brought nothing not clearly established beforehand;" "Conflict in this case of Tenth and Fourteenth Amendments;" Unclear editorial: "Trustees did not surrender power to Wallace as they did to Barnett at Ole Miss."
		17	18	3	14	<u>Total editorial items = 52</u>

17 editions (of 31 surveyed) with editorial content = 54.84%

<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Editorials	29	55.76%
Columns	6	11.54%
Cartoons	2	3.85%
Letters	15	28.85%

32.7% = Pro-desegregation
34.6% = Anti-desegregation
5.8% = Neutral
26.9% = Unclear

Figure 16

Tuscaloosa News Editorial Page Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
05-15-1963 P.1	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	"Preserving order and preventing, in the likely event of some integration, any chaotic interruption"
05-16-1963 P.1	Column: 1	1	0	0	0	"One of the Negroes is a mathematician and the other is an electrical engineer"
05-19-1963 P.4	Letter: 1	0	1	0	0	"We...are taking orders from Casto and Martin Luther King through the Kennedys," "to integrate is a step toward tearing down our churches, schools and homes"
05-22-1963 P.4	Cartoon: 1	1	0	0	0	Cartoon lampooning Northern U.S. race relations and suburbia
05-23-1963 P.1	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	Statement from Tuscaloosa leaders saying desegregation is the only way forward
05-23-1963 P.4	Letter: 1	0	1	0	0	"main spearhead drive of the liberals to destroy States Rights", "the cause of one-world integration"
05-26-1963 P.4	Letter: 2	0	2	0	0	"Who will save America here at home?;" "The greatest mistake of your fine career will be unleashing federal troops or marshals upon us."
05-29-1963 P.4	Letter: 1	0	1	0	0	"[The federal gov't] uses Gestapo-like tactics to force its will at bayonet point," "The Communists are masters in using uninformed people to help them accomplish their goal of world slavery."
05-30-1963 P.4	Column: 1; Letter: 1	1	0	0	1	Pro-desegregation syndicated Lippmann column: "They will not accept quietly an imposed inferiority in education," "this is a rather violent country;" Unclear letter: "Have you hired any Negroes on your staff...in the past nine years?"
05-31-1963 P.4	Letter: 1	0	1	0	0	"The federal gov't is pushing for a complete sweep of power...dictatorial power over the American people...Khrushchev and Castro are at the helm of this movement."
06-02-1963 P.4	Editorial: 1; Letter: 1	1	1	0	0	Editorial: "Abide by court rulings, no matter how repugnant...Our choice is between integrating peacefully and integration enforced by fed troops." Letter: "Forefathers," "Our nation is rapidly falling under a dictatorship every day that passes."
06-04-1963 P.4	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	"[Wallace carried himself] with proper dignity and restraint" on <i>Meet The Press</i> ." "We disagree with [his] thinking, as a practical matter"
06-05-1963 P.4	Editorial: 1	0	1	0	0	Anti-segregation column from the <i>Northwest Alabamian</i> newspaper: "Federal juggernaut", "invaders"
06-07-1963 P.4	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	"Negro students will be registered," "valid court order," "[Stand is] foolish and unnecessary"
06-08-1963 P.1	Editorial: 1	0	0	1	0	Netural front-page editorial about not believing rumors. "It's good sense not to believe wild rumors."
06-08-1963 P.4	Letter: 1	0	1	0	0	"I think you are trying to create sensationalism in these matters rather than a simple statement of news."
06-09-1963 P.4	Editorial: 1	0	0	1	0	"There is hope in many hearts for peace - for acceptance of major change without one hand raised in anger."
06-10-1963 P.4	Editorial: 1	0	0	1	0	"We, too, shall be trying to inform accurately, fully and properly."
06-12-1963 P.4	Editorial: 1	1	0	0	0	"Orders of a federal court must be carried out," "[Wallace] could have handled his responsibilities better."
		9	9	3	1	Total editorial items = 22
						40.9% = Pro-desegregation
						40.9% = Anti-desegregation
						13.6% = Neutral

19 editions (of 31 surveyed) with editorial content = 61.3%

Tuscaloosa News Editorial Page Content

<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	4.5% = Unclear
Editorials	10	45.45%	
Columns	2	9.10%	
Cartoons	1	4.50%	
Letters	9	40.90%	

Figure 17

Crimson White Editorial Page Content

<u>Date/Page#</u>	<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Pro Desegregation</u>	<u>Anti Desegregation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unclear</u>	<u>Content (; denotes new item)</u>
05-16-1963 P.4	Letter: 1	1	0	0	0	"Is there really any difference? You tell me if it hurts to hate just as much as it hurts to be hated."
06-09-1963 P.3	Editorial: 3	1	0	2	0	Neutral editorial: "comply with the regulations;" Pro-desegregation editorial: "We are in favor of desegregation on moral grounds," "[Resistors are] breaking their own backs;" Neutral editorial about behind-the-scenes work to desegregate safely
06-13-1963 P.4	Editorial: 2; Letter: 2	1	2	1	0	Pro-desegregation editorial: "[Black students] are here to stay." Neutral editorial about effective state troopers. Anti-desegregation letter: "you favor integration with a race of savages;" "misguided Negroes"
		3	2	3	0	Total editorial items = 8 37.5% = Pro-desegregation 25% = Anti-desegregation 37.5% = Neutral 0% = Unclear
3 editions (of 3 surveyed) with editorial content = 100%						
<u>Content Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>				
Editorials	5	62.50%				
Columns	0	0.00%				
Cartoons	0	0.00%				
Letters	3	37.50%				

Figure 18

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Annenberg Lerner, American Passages: Unit 13. Southern Renaissance,
<http://www.learner.org/amerpass/unit13/glossary.html>.

Arsenault, Raymond. Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Audit Bureau of Circulations, Editor & Publisher. Irvine, CA: Editor & Publisher Co, 1961.

Audit Bureau of Circulations, Editor & Publisher. Irvine, CA: Editor & Publisher Co., 1962.

Audit Bureau of Circulations, Editor & Publisher. Irvine, CA: Editor & Publisher Co, 1963).

Baker Motley, Constance, "James Meredith in Perspective," The Crisis. Vol. 70, No. 1., 1963.

Baran, Stanley J. & Davis, Dennis K. Mass Communications Theory: Foundations, Ferment and Future. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006.

Blanchard, Margaret A., ed., History of the Mass Media in the United States: An Encyclopedia. New York: Routledge, 1998.

Blasi, Anthony J., Segregationist Violence and Civil Rights Movements in Tuscaloosa. Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1980.

Braseth, Ralph, e-mail to author, August 2, 2010.

Brown, Nikki & Stentiford, Barry, eds., The Jim Crow Encyclopedia. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, 347 U.S. 483 (1954)

Carlton, Bob, "Editor's dream now a 118-year-old reality," The Birmingham News, August 13, 2006, <http://www.al.com/birminghamnews/future/stories/index.ssf?bnarr.html>.

Celebrating Courage: 50th Anniversary of Desegregation at UGA.
<http://www.uga.edu/news/desegregation/2000program/index.html> (2011).

Clark, E. Culpepper, The Schoolhouse Door: Segregation's Last Stand at the University of Alabama. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Classen, Steven D., Watching Jim Crow: The Struggles Over Mississippi TV, 1955-1969. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004.

Colburn, David R. & Scher, Richard K., Aftermath of the Brown Decision: The Politics of Interposition in Florida,
http://digitalcollections.fiu.edu/tequesta/files/1977/77_1_05.pdf.

Crofton, Gregory C., *Defending Segregation: Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission and the Press*. [Master's thesis], University of Mississippi, 2000.

Daniels, Maurice C., Horace T. Ward: *Desegregation of the University of Georgia, Civil Rights Advocacy, and Jurisprudence*. Atlanta: Clark Atlanta University Press, 2001.

Davies, David R., "Mississippi Journalists, the Civil Rights Movement and the Closed Society" (1994), <http://ocean.otr.usm.edu/~w304644/missjourn.html>.

Davies, David R., ed., *The Press and Race: Mississippi Journalists Confront the Movement*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2001.

Davies, David R., *The Postwar Decline of American Newspapers, 1945-1965: The History of American Journalism*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006.

Doyle, William, *An American Insurrection: The Battle of Oxford, Mississippi*. New York: Doubleday, 2001.

Eagles, Charles W., *The Price of Defiance: James Meredith and the Integration of Ole Miss*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

Eskew, Glenn T., George C. Wallace.
<http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1676> (2011, January 3).

Fleming, Karl, *Son of the Rough South: An Uncivil Memoir*. New York: Public Affairs, 2005

Friedman, Barbara G. and Richardson, John D., "A National Disgrace: Newspaper Coverage of the 1963 Birmingham Campaign and Beyond," *Journalism History*, Vol. 33, Issue 4., (2008).

Grant, Donald L., *The Way It Was In The South: The Black Experience in Georgia*. New York: Birch Lane Press, 1993.

Grimes, Charlotte. "Debate: Civil Rights and the Press." *Journalism Studies*, Volume 6, Number 1. (2005).

Grimes, Millard B., *The Last Linotype: The Story of Georgia and its Newspapers Since World War II*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985.

Hanson, Clarence B. Jr, *The Story of the Birmingham News – A Good Newspaper*. New York: Newcomen Society in North America, 1967.

Hatfield, Edward A. *Desegregation of Public Education*.
<http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-3616&sug=y> (2008, May 28).

Hederman, Jr., Robert M., *The Hederman Story: A Saga of the Printed Word in Mississippi*, New York: Newcomen Society in North America, 1966.

Hobbs, Delores A., *The Birmingham News*,
<http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1388> (2010, July 23).

Hunter-Gault, Charlayne, *In My Place*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1992.

Johnson, Guion, "Southern Paternalism Toward Negroes after Emancipation," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 23. No. 4. (1957).

Katagiri, Yasuhiro, *The Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission: Civil Rights and States' Rights*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2001.

Law, Ian. *Race In the News*. Hampshire, England: Palgrave, 2002.

Lucy v. Adams. 350 U.S. 1. (1955).

McCombs, Maxwell. *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2004.

McCombs, Maxwell. "The Agenda-Setting Role of the Mass Media in the Shaping of Public Opinion." http://www.infoamerica.org/documentos_pdf/mccombs01.pdf. 2003.

McNair, Joseph D., *Racism*,
<http://faculty.mdc.edu/jmcnair/EDG2701%20All%20Classes/Racism.htm>. 2004.

Mitchell, Jerry, "Jackson Papers were Tools of Spy Commission," *The Clarion-Leger*, January 28, 1990.

Nash, Amanda, Hamilton Holmes. <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-1225&sug=y>. 2005, August 19.

Nelson, Jack., *Nieman Reports: Reporting on the Civil Rights Movement*.
<http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/100991/Reporting-on-the-Civil-Rights-Movement.aspx>

Oxford English Dictionary: "racism." <http://www.oed.com>

Pollard, Sam (Producer) & Wormser, Richard (Director), "Episode 4: Terror and triumph (1940-1954)" *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow*, San Francisco, CA: California Newsreel, 2002.

Pratt, Robert A., *We Shall Not Be Moved*. (Athens, GA: University Press of Georgia, 2002) p.ix.

Pratt, Robert A., Horace T. Ward. <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-880&sug=y>. 2003, May 9.

Prochnau, Bill "The Tale of a Pulitzer, a Paper, a Family," *The Washington Post*, April 25, 1983.

Roberts, Gene & Klibanoff, Hank, *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation*. New York: Vintage, 2007

Sicha, Chaire. "A Graphic History of Newspaper Circulation Over the Last Two Decades." October 26, 2009, *The Awl*. <http://www.theawl.com/2009/10/a-graphic-history-of-newspaper-circulation-over-the-last-two-decades>.

Silver, James W., "Mississippi: The Closed Society." *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 30. No. 1., (1964).

Sitton, Claude, "3,000 Troops Put Down Mississippi Rioting And Seize 200 as Negro Attends Classes; Ex-Gen. Walker is Held for Insurrection," *The New York Times*, October 2, 1962, <http://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/100262race-ra.html>

Sitton, Claude, "Alabama Admits Negro Students; Wallace Bows to Federal Force; Kennedy sees "Moral Crisis" in U.S." *The New York Times*, June 12, 1963, <http://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/061263race-ra.html>.

Teel, Leonard R., *Ralph Emerson McGill: Voice of the Southern Conscience*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2001.

"The Press: Revolt in Mississippi," *Time*, November 8, 1954, <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,857653,00.html>

U.S. Census Bureau. "United States Census 1960." 1960. <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1960.html>.

U.S. Department of the Interior. "Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the United States: Theme Study." (2000). p.64.

"Walker Demands a 'Vocal Protest,'" *New York Times*, September 30, 1962.

Wallenstein, Peter, ed. *Higher Education and the Civil Rights Movement: White Supremacy, Black Southerners, and College Campuses*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2008.

Wanta, Wayne. *The Public and the National Agenda: How People Learn About Important Issues*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007.

Weill, Susan, *In a Madhouse's Din: Civil Rights Coverage by Mississippi's Daily Press, 1948 – 1968*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002.

Williams, Juan, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965*. New York: Penguin Books, 1987.

VITA

Michael A. Patronik was born on January 14, 1983, in Biloxi, Mississippi. Patronik graduated from Biloxi High School in 2001, then attended the University of Mississippi, from which he graduated in 2006 with a degrees in international studies and German. During his undergraduate time, Patronik worked at *The Daily Mississippian* campus newspaper in a variety of positions, and was also named Who's Who Among Students in American Universities & Colleges. After working in Washington, D.C., and studying in Berlin, Germany, post-graduation, Patronik returned to the University of Mississippi to begin graduate studies in journalism. Upon his return, Patronik served as editor-in-chief of *The Daily Mississippian*, and afterward continued work as a freelance writer and analyst during graduate school.

At the time of publication, Patronik has been selected for Navy Officer Candidate School, and will serve as a Surface Warfare Officer in the U.S. Navy after graduation.